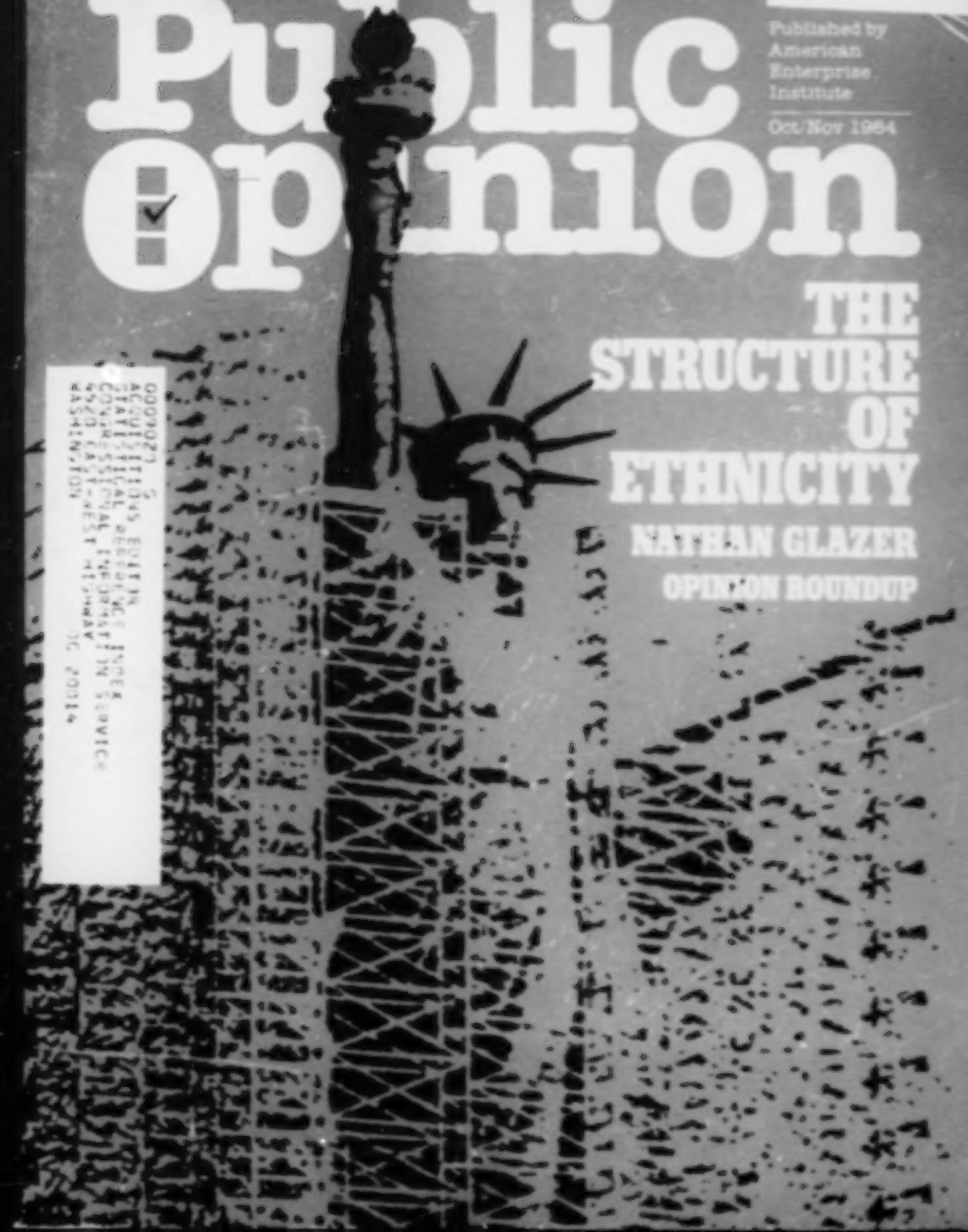
$5.00

Public Opinion

Published by
American
Enterprise
Institute

Oct/Nov 1984



THE STRUCTURE OF ETHNICITY

NATHAN GLAZER

OPINION ROUNDUP

0007021 3
ACQUISITIONS EDITOR
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INDEX
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE
4520 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY
WASHINGTON DC 20014

Public Opinion

Volume 7, Number 5 October/November 1984

Publisher
William J. Baroody, Jr.

Co-Editors
Seymour Martin Lipset
Ben J. Wattenberg

Senior Editor
Everett Carll Ladd

Managing Editor
Karlyn H. Keene

Deputy Managing Editor
Victoria A. Sackett

Assistant Editor
Graham Hueber

Research Assistant
Susan Irvings

Editorial Board
David R. Gergen, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick,
Irving Kristol, Howard Penniman,
Austin Ranney, Richard M. Scammon,
Laurence H. Silberman, Herbert Stein,
and Richard J. Whalen

Editorial Associate
Marilyn M. Potter

Assistants
John Benson
Lois Timms

Art & Design Director
Pat Taylor

Chart Illustrator
Hördur Karlsson

Staff Editor
Elizabeth D. Ashooh

PUBLIC OPINION, October/November 1984, Vol. 7, No. 5. Published bimonthly by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Copyright 1984 American Enterprise Institute.

Subscription rates: $26.00 for one year, $48.00 for two years. Individual copy: $5.00. Information on bulk orders of multiple subscriptions available on request. Editorial and business offices: c/o AEI, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Send changes of address and all subscription correspondence to Circulation Department, c/o AEI, same address. "American Enterprise Institute" and are registered service marks of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

ISSN 0149-9157

CONTENTS

2 **THE STRUCTURE OF ETHNICITY**
by Nathan Glazer
This noted analyst reviews the Opinion Roundup data and examines the importance of ethnic identification in American life.

6 **RECENT FABLES ABOUT RONALD REAGAN**
by William C. Adams
Was Ronald Reagan's victory on November 6th merely a personal one, as so many people have said? The author explodes a few myths.

10 **THE EDITORIAL ENDORSEMENT GAME**
by Nick Thimmesch
A look at the changes in newspaper presidential endorsements since 1932.

14 **AMERICAN ATTITUDES TOWARD RACE RELATIONS**
by Tom W. Smith and Paul B. Sheatsley
Forty years of data show the vast changes in thinking that have come about between the races.

16 **MITTERRAND AT MIDPOINT**
by Everett Carll Ladd
What the French think of themselves.

17 **OPINION ROUNDUP**
Ethnicity; Mitterrand and his People; Positively the Last Publication of Reagan-Mondale Trial Heats

42 **GENERALLY SPEAKING: SURVEYING THE MILITARY'S TOP BRASS**
by Andrew Kohut and Nicholas Horrock
Some surprising results from a survey of the military elite.

46 **BRITAIN EVALUATES RONALD REAGAN**
by Ivor Crewe
If the November election had taken place in Britain, Reagan would have won a landslide . . . defeat. The author tells us why.

by William C. Adams

Recent Fables about

I don't think the Teflon-coated president is going to have much trouble.

Kevin Phillips

Reagan has a remarkable ability to deflect attack and a lot of that ability comes from the sheer force of personality.

Dan Rather

The polls show that many more people like Ronald Reagan personally than support his policies.

Bill Moyers

A president whose personality deflects substantive attacks and attracts voters who fundamentally reject his policies? Ronald Reagan's escape from the Louisville debate shellacking with most of his popularity intact only reinforced this idea. Yet the "Teflon" notion says more about the power of convenient clichés than it does about the character of Ronald Reagan's popularity. In fact, some of those clichés are little more than myths.

Myth #1: *Ronald Reagan's popularity is immune to the problems of his administration.* This myth assumes that the president got a free ride from an uncritical American public too beguiled by Reagan's charms to notice the sorry state of the economy. Nonsense. With unemployment at record postwar heights by January 1983, President Reagan's approval rating as measured by the Gallup organization had fallen to 35 percent. None of the prior six presidents had sunk this low after just twenty-four months in office. Reagan's scores declined so dramatically, they quickly reached the depths of those given Lyndon Johnson in 1968, Richard Nixon during Watergate, and Jimmy Carter after prolonged economic and hostage agony. This comparison alone ought to debunk the myth of the Teflon president. It has not. Instead, it has given rise to another myth.

Myth #2: *Reagan has an unrivaled capacity to rebound in the polls; Reagan's problems, unlike those of most other politicians, do not stick to him.* Wrong again.

Ronald Reagan

Although Reagan rebounded 20 percentage points in the Gallup poll—from 35 percent back up to the 57 percent approval rating he had in late September 1984—there is nothing novel about that. Jimmy Carter enjoyed a 33 percentage point resurgence and more than doubled his approval rating from a low of 28 percent in June 1979 to a high of 61 percent in December of that year. Harry Truman made a 28 point comeback, from 32 percent to 60 percent approval in the second year of his presidency. Gerald Ford twice made 14-15 point recoveries (from 37 to 52 percent and 39 to 53 percent).

How did Ronald Reagan "walk away" from Beirut? The same way John Kennedy walked away from the Bay of Pigs. Reagan has no magical, heretofore unknown, powers of resilience.

Myth #3: *Reagan's personal popularity is overpowering and unique.* Most Americans are honestly eager to like their president, regardless of politics. Except during Watergate, presidents have invariably topped Gallup's "most admired" lists, for example.

Gallup also attempts to measure personal popularity using a "scalometer" ranging from +5 for very favorable to −5 for very unfavorable. Reagan's scores are good, but not extraordinary. In August of 1984, 42 percent of those interviewed gave Reagan "highly favorable" marks of +4 or +5. In 1972, 40 percent of those surveyed gave the same most favorable evaluations to the surely less lovable Richard Nixon. Eisenhower set Gallup's record with 66 percent ranking him highly favorable personally.

Reagan has looked strong in part because his immediate predecessors did not fare as well. In 1976 only 28 percent gave Ford a +4 or +5, and in 1980 just 20 percent rated Carter that high.

Ronald Reagan *is* genuinely liked by most Americans. All of the survey evidence confirms that he is personally popular. But his popularity has neither attained particularly historic proportions, nor has it been so awesome that it could overshadow his performance.

Consider Patrick Caddell's assessment of a survey taken at the end of Reagan's first year in office, when his approval rating was plummeting: "He may be viewed as likable and genial and nice, but that doesn't translate into political popularity." This survey, taken by Caddell and three other top Democratic pollsters (Peter Hart, William Hamilton, and Hugh Schwartz) for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, shows that personal popularity can be quite independent of approval, and that Americans are capable of making those distinctions.

A question posed by ABC News and the *Washington Post* five times between April 1982 and May 1984 provides evidence that many citizens are capable of liking the man but not the message. Also sobering is the reminder that in each of these surveys there is one small group that likes the message but not the man (see table 1).

Table 1

Question: Which of these statements comes closest to your opinion? A) I like Reagan personally and approve of most of his policies; B) I like Reagan personally but I disapprove of most of his policies; C) I don't like Reagan personally but I approve of most of his policies; D) I don't like Reagan personally and I disapprove of most of his policies.

	April 1982	September 1982	August 1983	January 1984	May 1984
Like Reagan personally, approve policies	41%	35%	38%	40%	39%
Like Reagan personally, disapprove policies	28	33	30	25	28
Don't like Reagan personally, approve policies	9	7	9	13	11
Don't like Reagan personally, disapprove policies	20	23	21	18	18

Source: Surveys by ABC News/Washington Post, latest that of May 1984.

Most people said they liked the president, but a substantial number of that group said they did not approve of his policies. Many Americans have not been lured into his policy fold, suggesting that there are serious limits to the power of personality alone.

At the same time, more than one-third of those who didn't like Reagan personally said they actually liked his policies. How ironic, after all the talk about the magnetism of Reagan the Telegenic, that some of his margin of victory may well have come from voters who liked his policies and not his persona.

Myth #4: *Reagan has manipulated the news media into uncritical coverage, leaving his image unscathed.* Systematic content analyses have refuted this idea. Michael Robinson, Maura Clancey, and Lisa Grand counted a ratio of thirteen negative policy-related stories for every positive one about Reagan on the nightly television news during the first 100 days of 1983. They observed that "the White House press has neither flacked for Ronald Reagan nor ignored his shortcomings—personal or policy related."

An extensive study by Professor Fredric Smoller of 4,883 presidential news stories on CBS Evening News since 1968 found that Reagan's treatment was more negative than that given his predecessors after the same number of years. The press corps has not been an accomplice in preserving the president's image.

Myth #5: *Reagan is more popular than his foreign or domestic programs are.* Actually, the president's overall ratings have been only modestly higher than the discrete verdicts on his economic and foreign policies. Along with asking opinions about "the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president," Gallup asks for assessments of his handling of economic conditions and foreign policy.

Reagan's ratings on handling economic and foreign policy have averaged about seven points less than his overall approval rating. During his first term, his ratings on handling the economy proved to be an extremely accurate predictor of Reagan's overall approval rating; the correlation was a powerful .95. Evaluations of Reagan's foreign policy showed a weaker relationship to overall popularity; the correlation was .64.

The fact that Reagan's overall approval is usually slightly higher than his foreign or economic policy ratings is often portrayed as remarkable. It is not. Historically the overall Gallup ratings of recent incumbent presidents running for reelection have surpassed the distinct ratings of their economic and foreign policies. In early 1980, for example, when 55 percent of the public told Gallup they approved of Jimmy Carter's job performance, only 40 percent approved of his handling of "domestic policies," and only 33 percent liked the way he was "dealing with the Soviet Union." Similarly, 75 percent said they approved of Lyndon Johnson's general performance in early 1964, 70 percent approved of his domestic policies, and only 61 percent liked his foreign policy. There is nothing unusual about this pattern.

Myth #6: *Reagan is popular, but many of his specific policies are not.* This may be partially true, but it is not unique to Reagan. Most Democrats, for example, disagreed with Mondale on school prayer, busing, and tax increases. Unlike Reagan, most Americans oppose efforts to overturn the Supreme Court decision on abortion (although they are by no means enthusiastic about the practice), and they support an Equal Rights Amendment. But that is a selective reading of survey data.

The argument cuts both ways. It is worth remembering that Reagan's overall job ratings have actually been lower than public support for a variety of policies he advocates. For example, solid majorities of Americans support a constitutional amendment on school prayer, think federal income taxes are too high, believe the courts are not harsh enough with criminals, favor the death penalty, oppose busing, and reject racial quotas (see *Public Opinion*, October/November 1983, p. 29; February/March 1983, p. 31). On these issues public agreement with particular Reagan policy directions is substantially greater than support for his presidency—precisely the opposite of what is usually trumpeted.

Results on other specific issues vary, and of course question wording matters: Yankelovich asks about "keeping our defenses strong," while Harris asks about "controlling defense spending," for example. Nevertheless, endorsements of Reagan in certain areas fall below generalized support given his presidency.

In this vein, only 28 percent told Gallup they approve of Reagan's handling of "the situation in Central America," and only 22 percent were happy with his performance on the federal deficit. The fatal flaws in this approach were that (a) the particular topics may have been a low priority for many respondents and (b) displeasure with a Reagan performance did not signal a preference for a liberal alternative. (See Myth #7.)

Myth #7: *Only 22 percent support for a Reagan* *policy must have meant 78 percent support for a Mondale policy.* Contrary to early analyses, public dissatisfaction with a Reagan policy did not necessarily mean that voters thought the Democrats would be better. When pollsters got around to asking comparative questions ("Which candidate would do a better job on . . ."), this myth was challenged.

Even though Reagan had gotten low marks for the deficit, for example, he was still considered a better bet than Mondale to reduce it (46 to 32 percent in a September 6-9 Gallup-*Newsweek* poll). And even though Reagan had never rallied the public behind his Central American activities, he still beat Mondale for "dealing with the situation" there (41 to 35 percent in Gallup, August 10-13). On many topics, Americans who had been quite willing to criticize Mr. Reagan registered even harsher evaluations of Mr. Mondale.

At the same time, majorities sided with Mondale on social welfare and fairness issues, and on selected international matters. Why was Mondale unable to exploit these advantages? Simply put, some issues count more than others— and the economy counts most of all. In a late October survey by CBS News/*New York Times,* 58 percent of Reagan supporters and 53 percent of Mondale supporters said the economy was more important than military or foreign policy in their voting choice; only 16 percent of Reagan supporters and 21 percent of Mondale supporters named "military/foreign affairs."

Myth #8: *Reagan won from personal style.* Reagan's heralded abilities to wield a teleprompter, to produce moist eyes and a lump in the throat, and to project sincerity, conviction, and confidence certainly help him politically. And, in a close election, personal style could help account for a slim margin of victory. Yet the 1984 election campaign was not a referendum on personality.

From the day Reagan was first inaugurated, Americans judged him by his stewardship of the economy— not on the basis of his emotional anecdotes, genial manner, or well-pitched voice.

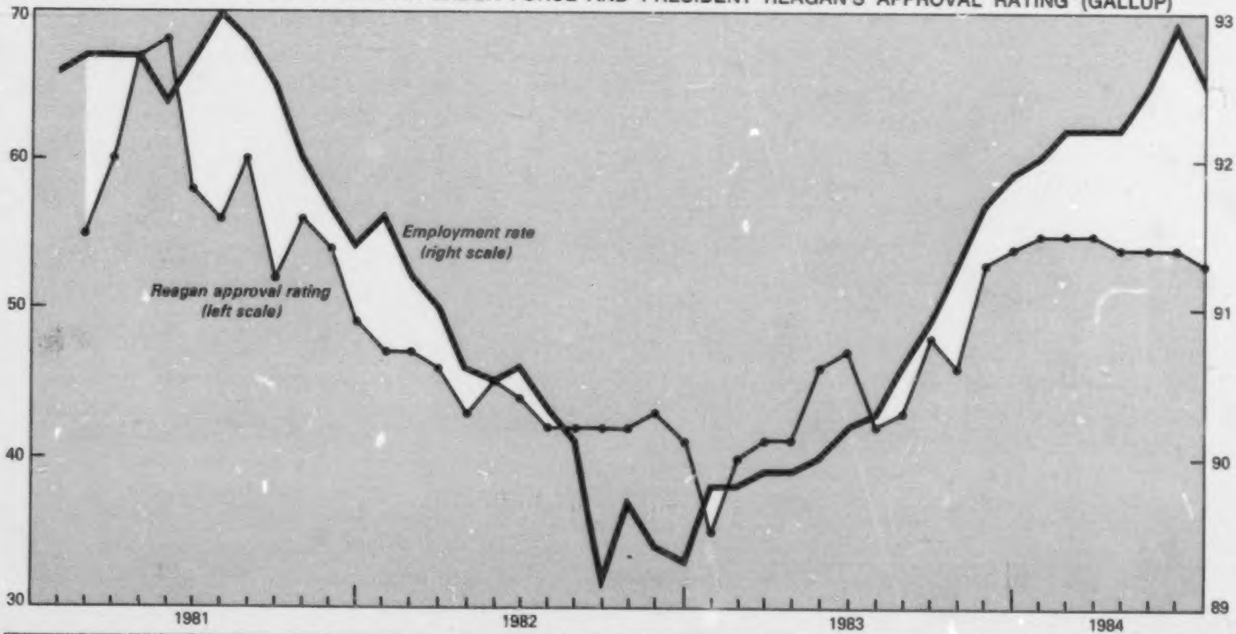
He benefited from inflation's rapid decline, but was then plagued by the unemployment half of the "Misery Index." The unemployment rate turned into a nearly perfect predictor of Reagan's popularity. For every one point increase in unemployment, Reagan's popularity decreased six points. Changes in joblessness in the civilian labor force can account for about 80 percent of the changes in Reagan's job ratings. Figure 1 plots this relationship, using the *employment* rate (100 minus the unemployment rate).

So, though style probably helped endear Reagan to the public, it was his performance on the economy that brought him the greatest rewards. Having presided over the first postwar economic boom to simultaneously bolster real disposable personal income and reduce unemployment without igniting inflation, he earned handsome boosts in popularity.

Republicans who have convinced themselves that their hero has a permanent public seal of approval are quite mistaken. The bad news for the Republicans is that Reagan wears no shield of invulnerability. The bad news for the Democrats is that Reagan was able to win big without it.

Figure 1

PERCENT EMPLOYED IN CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE AND PRESIDENT REAGAN'S APPROVAL RATING (GALLUP)



Note: Employment rate = 100 minus the unemployment rate. Reagan ratings from the Gallup poll.

by Tom W. Smith and Paul B. Sheatsley

American Attitudes toward Race Relations

Presidential elections are usually occasions for national pride and at least some stirrings of patriotism. Our sometimes unseemly—but usually undramatic—democracy rolls on, replacing president after president without major disruptions. Yet, this year, in certain postelection analyses, we have heard a note that, if true, would subtract from our self-congratulation. CBS's Bill Moyers, for one, bemoaned this election as one of the most racially divisive in recent memory.

In 1960, the Republicans could claim about one-third of the black vote. By 1984, only one out of ten black Americans supported Ronald Reagan, and blacks provided Walter Mondale more than one-quarter of his support, up from about one-fifth in 1980. Reflecting their electoral fortunes at the presidential level, the Democrats have received a majority of the white vote only once since 1948. But what does all this mean? Because blacks and whites tend to vote differently, does this make us a racist society?

In 1942 Gunnar Myrdal finished his seminal work on race relations, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*. Up to this point it had been easy for many to live comfortably with what Myrdal described as the contradictions between our noble pronouncement that "all men are created equal" and the segregation of and discrimination against black Americans. As Ronald Reagan noted during the 1980 presidential debate, those years preceding Myrdal's book were a time "when this country didn't even know it had a racial problem." Signalling a new sense of things, the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Denver (now at the University of Chicago) conducted the first national survey of white attitudes toward blacks in 1942, and continued investigating race relations in over a dozen different surveys over the next four decades.

Looking over this forty-year span, we are struck by the steady, massive growth in racial tolerance. In the early forties, segregation was deeply entrenched in virtually every important institution and organization from major league baseball to the armed services. These institutional barriers to equality reflected the ignorance, mistrust, and feelings of superiority that generally dwelt in white Americans' minds. Forty years later, we find that every *de jure* and many *de facto* manifestations of racism and segregation have disappeared. Equally impressive have been the changes that have occurred in the sphere of "folkways," which educator and social scientist William Graham Sumner had considered almost impervious to adaptation.

We have only a single attitude measure that spans the entire forty years, but it deals with a crucial area

Table 1

Question: Do you think white students and (Negro/black) students should go to the same schools or separate schools?

	Black/white students should go to the same schools
1942	30%
1956	49
1956	49
1956	48
1963	63
1963	62
1964	62
1964	60
1965	67
1965	68
1970	74
1972	85
1972	83
1976	83
1977	86
1980	86
1982	88
1984	90

Note: White respondents.

of racial attitudes—school integration—and, as we will see, it reflects general changes in race relations (see table 1).

In 1942, only 30 percent of whites thought that blacks and whites should attend the same schools. Since then, support for integrated schools has grown nearly 1.5 percentage points per year. By 1977, a pro-integration consensus of more than 85 percent had emerged. The most striking features of this trend are: (1) its massive magnitude, moving from a solid pro-segregation majority to an overwhelming pro-integration consensus; (2) its long duration, continuing over four decades; and (3) its steady relentless pace.

The trend on school desegregation was echoed by answers to numerous other questions on race relations (see table 2). Acceptance of a black neighbor who has

Table 2

Question: If a (Negro/black) with the same income and education as you have moved into your block, would it make any difference to you?

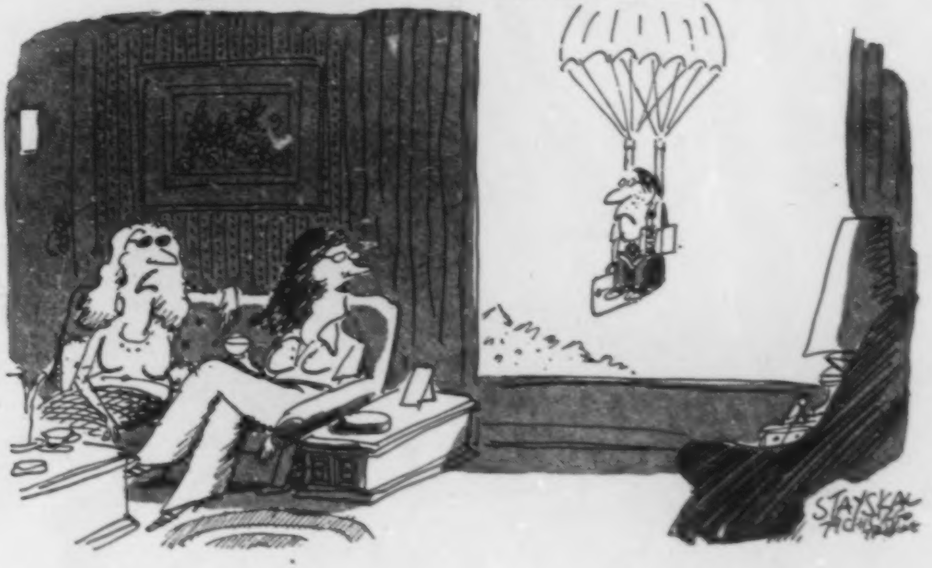
Generally speaking, do you think there should be separate sections for (Negroes/blacks) on streetcars and buses?

Do you think (Negroes/blacks) should have as good a chance as white people to get any kind of job, or do you think white people should have the first chance at any kind of job?

	"Equal" black neighbor okay	Same streetcar, bus okay	Hire equally
1942 (NORC)	35%	44%	—
1944 (NORC)	—	—	42%
1946 (NORC)	—	—	47
1956 (NORC)	52	60	—
1963 (SRS)	61	—	—
1963 (SRS)	65	77	83
1964 (SRS)	64	—	—
1965 (SRS)	68	—	—
1965 (SRS)	75	—	—
1966 (SRS)	69	—	87
1970 (SRS)	76	88	—
1972 (GSS)	84	—	96

Note: White respondents.

'When we pointed out the faults of busing, the government came up with a new plan.'



Reprinted by permission, Tribune Media Services.

(Continued on page 50)

by Everett Carll Ladd

Mitterrand at Midpoint

In 1981, after twenty-three years of center-right rule, France elected a Socialist president—François Mitterrand. Reactions were predictably intense. Stories about capital fleeing France, four-star restaurants closing their doors, and a new solidarity among the working classes (a second French Revolution) filled pages of press accounts about the new regime. Three and one-half years of Socialist rule have done little to temper sentiments. Scion of wealth and power Baron de Rothschild has written an autobiography that excoriates Mitterrand's regime, to the apparent delight of French readers who kept the book on the best-seller list for weeks. French actor Yves Montand—recently converted to politics and to supply-side economics (remind you of anyone?)—now excites wide audiences with his anti-Socialist pronouncements.

These anecdotal indicators aside, how do the French view Socialist rule? A brief review of current French opinion appears on pages 32-37 of this issue.

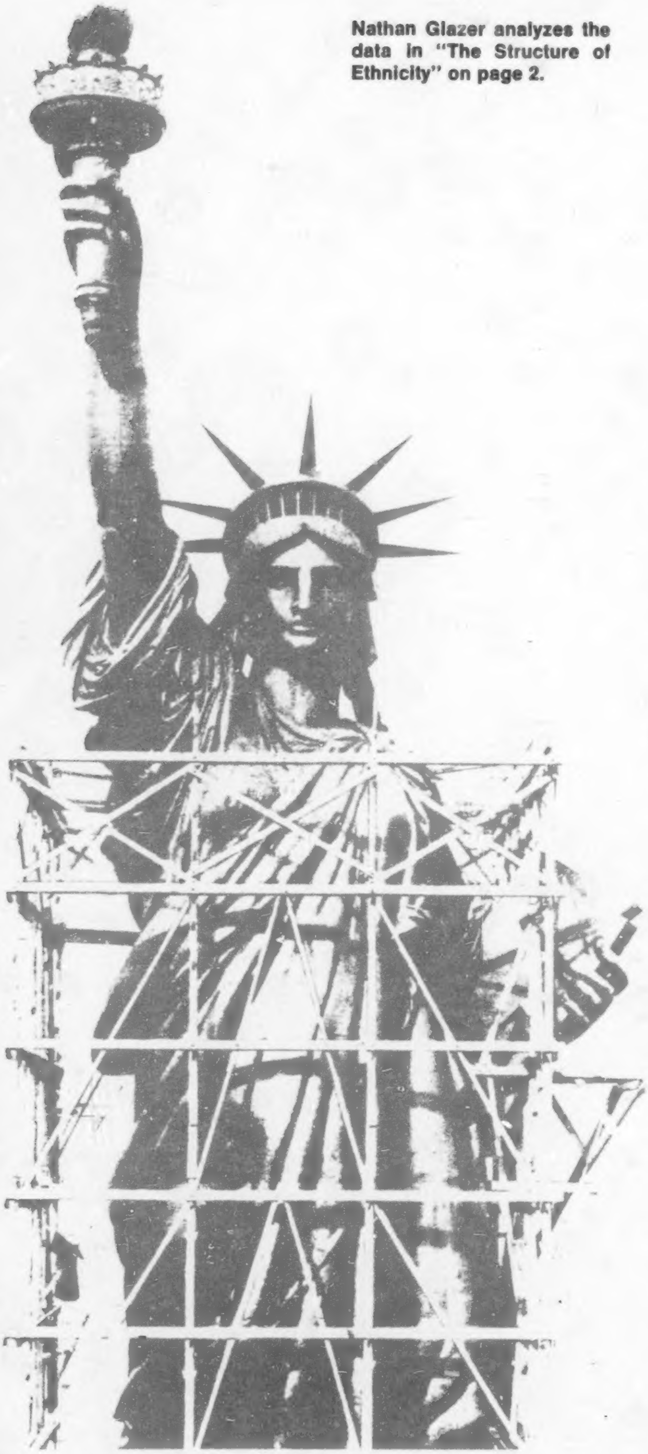
The data we show point out the extent to which Mitterrand's and the Socialist party's fortunes have declined since they took office. In the face of mounting economic problems, only a fifth of the French public in an April 1984 survey by BVA rated the Socialists' rule as "positive" in its accomplishments, while three-fifths called it negative. Other questions show the same

(Continued on page 41)

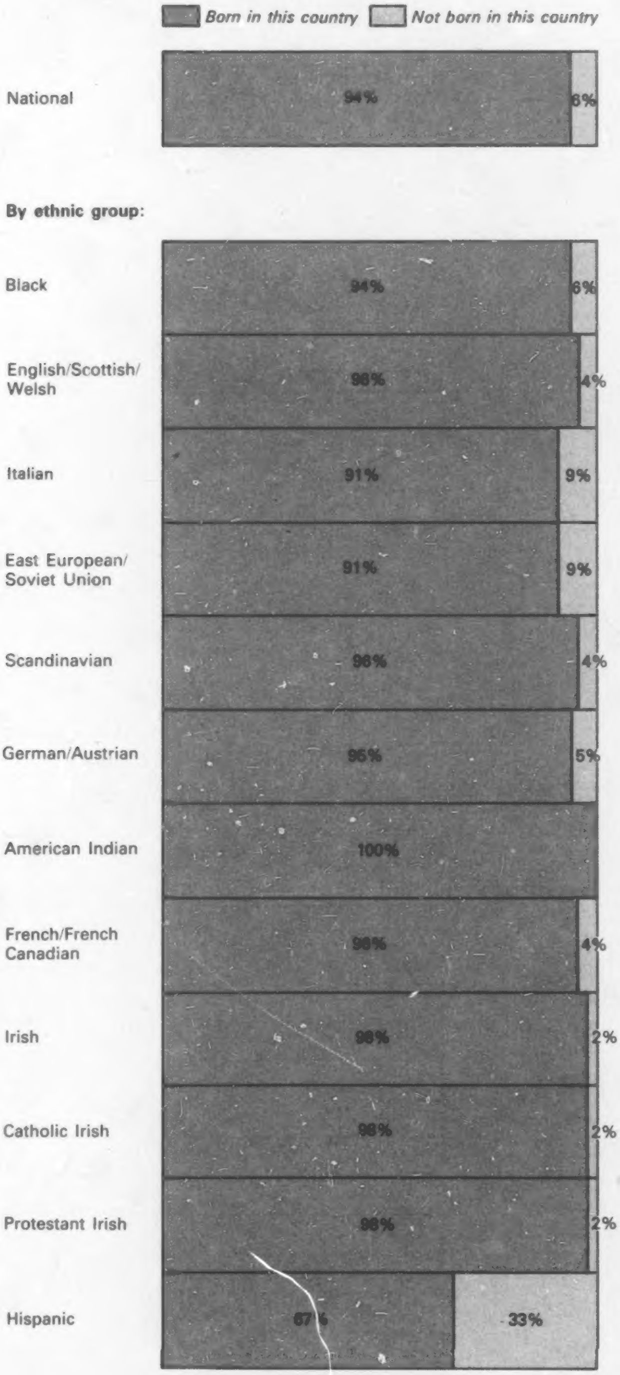
The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research has just concluded an agreement with the French survey organization Brulé Ville Associés (BVA). Under this agreement, the extensive and highly regarded opinion studies that BVA conducts will be deposited in the Roper archive and thus be readily available to researchers here in the United States. In the future, we hope to feature additional BVA data in *Public Opinion*, with data from other French survey organizations including the Société Française d'Enquêtes par Sondages (SOFRES) and the Institut Français d'Opinion Publique (IFOP), and from comparable organizations across Western Europe.

ETHNICITY IN AMERICA

Nathan Glazer analyzes the data in "The Structure of Ethnicity" on page 2.



Question: Were you born in this country?



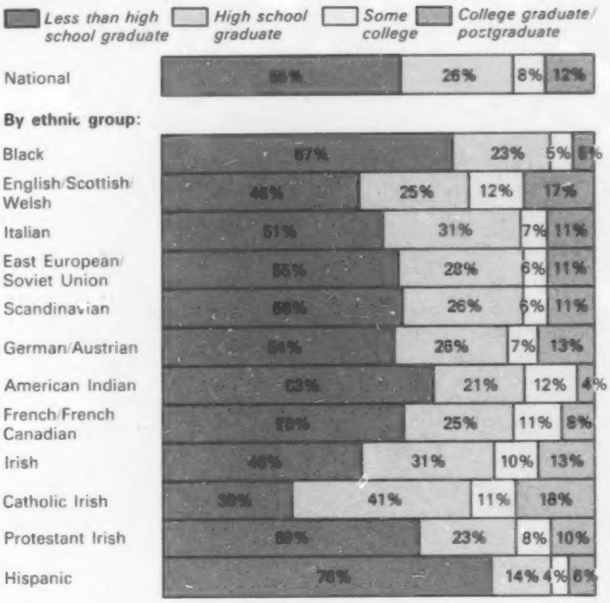
Note: 1982, 1983, 1984 combined. Jewish responses = 82%, 19%.
Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

OPINION ROUNDUP

Demographic Details

FATHER'S EDUCATION

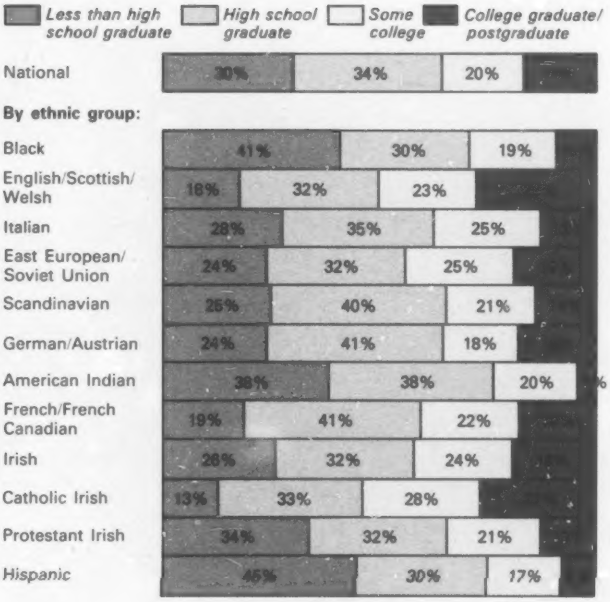
Question: What is the highest grade in elementary school or high school that your father finished and got credit for?



Jewish responses = 39%, 26%, 9%, 26%.

AND ONE'S OWN

Question: What is the highest grade in elementary school or high school that you finished or got credit for?



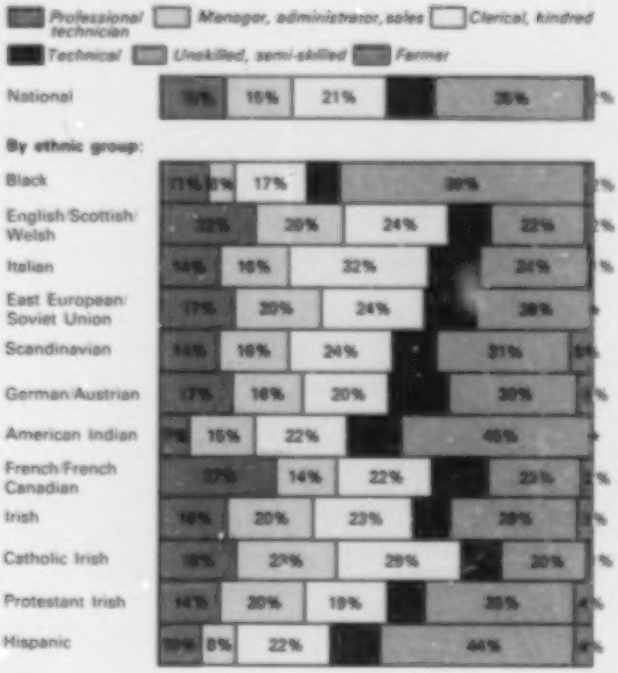
Jewish responses = 8%, 18%, 29%, 45%.

Note: 1982, 1983, 1984 combined.

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

OCCUPATION

Question: What kind of work do you (did you normally) do? That is, what (is/was) your job called?



Jewish responses = 25%, 46%, 23%, 0%, 7%, 0%.

Note: * = less than .5%. 1982, 1983, 1984 combined.

INCOME

Question: In which of these groups did your total *family* income from all sources fall last year, before taxes, that is?

REGION

	By family income:							By region:								
	< $10,000	$10-14,999	$15-19,999	$20-24,999	$25-34,999	$35-49,999	$50,000 and over	New England	Middle Atlantic	East North Central	West North Central	South Atlantic	East South Central	West South Central	Mountain	Pacific
National	26%	16%	11%	13%	15%	11%	8%	5%	16%	21%	8%	18%	8%	8%	5%	12%
Black	45	16	10	9	11	6	2	1	16	20	4	28	13	10	*	9
English/Scottish/ Welsh	19	15	10	14	16	14	13	5	12	16	7	21	9	6	9	16
Italian	16	13	15	14	22	10	11	15	41	16	3	8	*	4	5	9
East European/ Soviet Union	18	15	10	14	18	16	10	6	31	36	3	6	1	6	4	7
Scandinavian	22	19	12	15	13	11	7	3	4	34	26	6	1	1	9	16
German/Austrian	21	15	12	14	17	13	8	2	17	29	14	13	4	6	5	10
American Indian	28	19	14	11	13	11	5	2	7	12	7	22	16	15	7	12
French/French Canadian	17	15	11	18	17	12	10	27	9	18	8	11	2	7	2	15
Irish	20	19	11	14	15	14	8	6	12	16	9	19	8	11	4	15
Catholic Irish	15	15	10	10	21	16	13	13	23	21	11	12	4	4	2	11
Protestant Irish	22	21	12	17	10	12	5	2	6	13	8	25	9	16	6	15
Hispanic	34	23	10	10	15	5	4	1	21	8	2	5	*	31	9	25

Jewish responses = 15%, 7%, 8%, 7%, 18%, 23%, 22%.

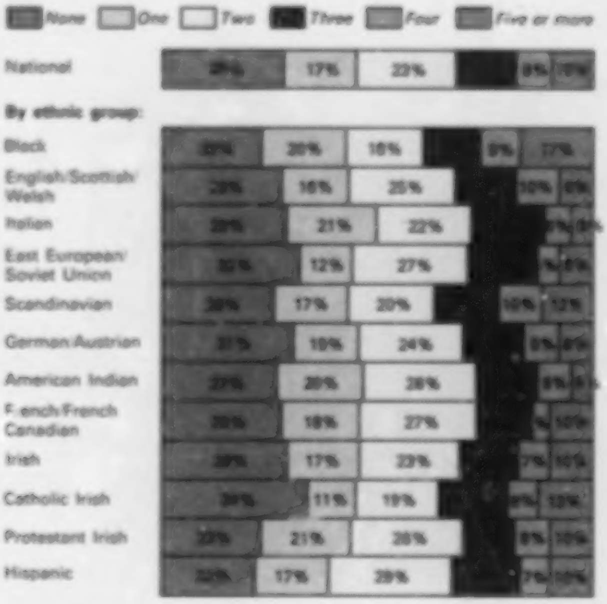
Jewish responses = 3%, 50%, 8%, 5%, 11%, 2%, 3%, 3%, 16%.

Note: 1982, 1983, 1984 combined. * = less than .5%. Interviewer coded region.

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

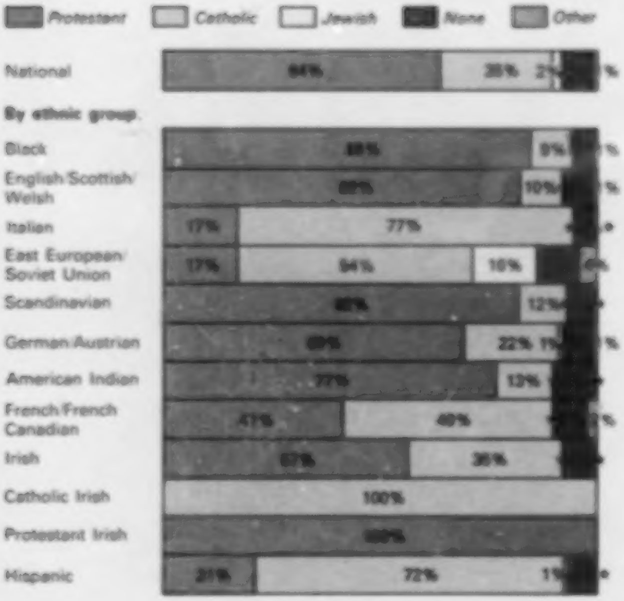
Question: How many children have you ever had? Please count all that were born alive at any time (including any you had from a previous marriage).



Jewish responses = 32%, 14%, 35%, 12%, 2%, 3%.

RELIGION

Question: What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?

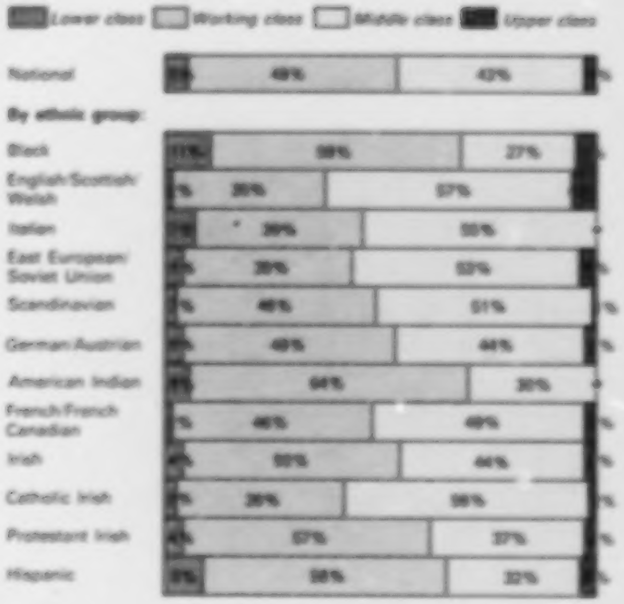


Note: * = less than .5%. 1982, 1983, 1984 combined.

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

SOCIAL CLASS

Question: If you were asked to use one of four names for your social class, which would you say you belong in: the lower class, the working class, the middle class, or the upper class?



Jewish responses = 0%, 12%, 79%, 10%.

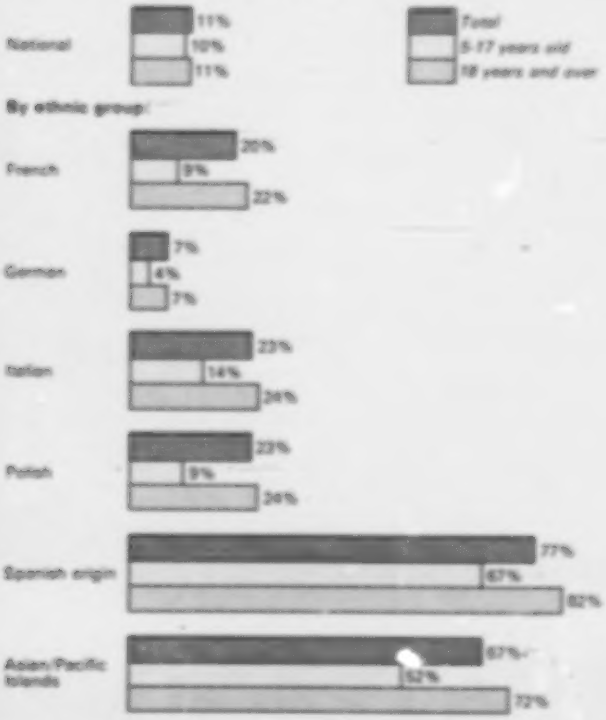
Note: * = less than .5%. 1982, 1983, 1984 combined.

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

Question: Do you speak a language other than English at home?

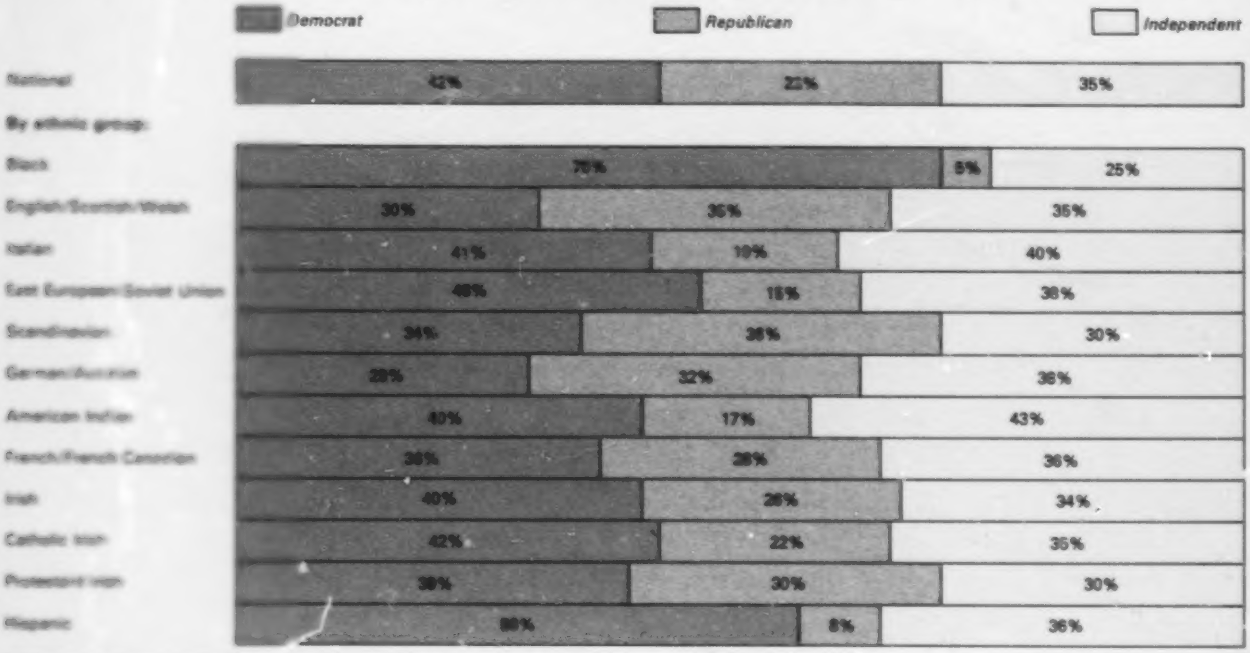
Percent speaking language other than English at home



Source: Data from the 1980 Census, compiled by Edith McArthur for *American Demographics*, October 1984, pp. 32-33.

Political Beliefs

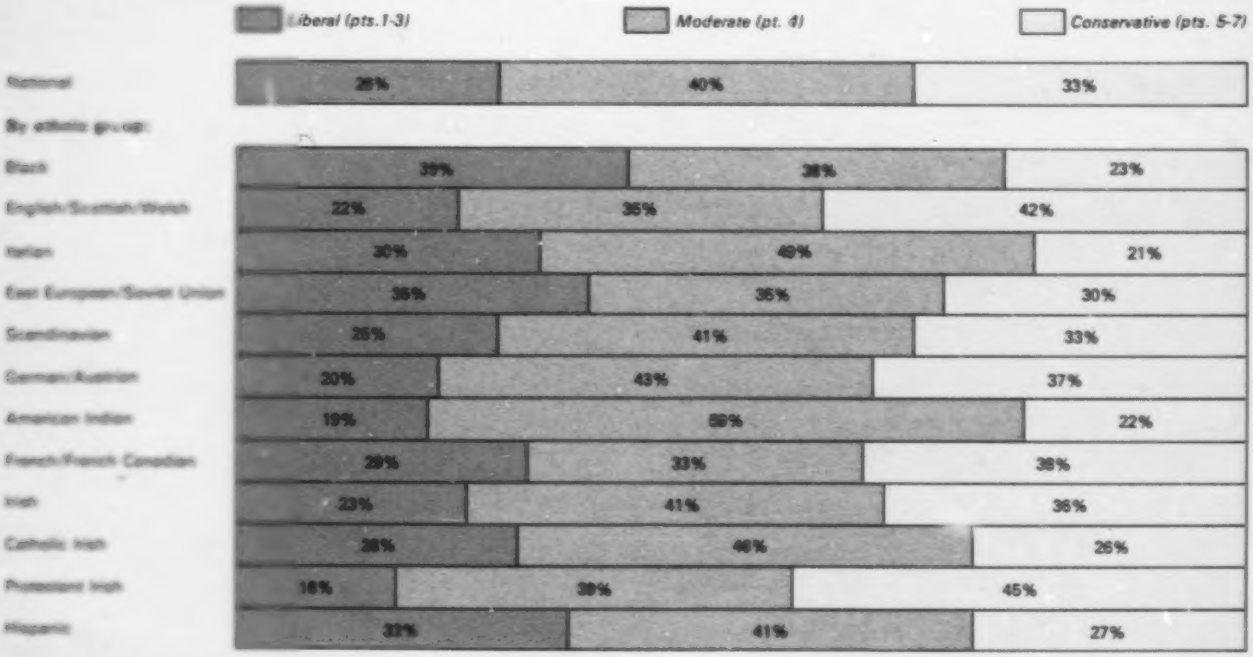
Question: Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what?



Note: Catholic German/Austrian = 42%, 21%, 37%; Protestant German/Austrian = 25%, 39%, 36%. For American Indian N = 98.

Jewish responses = 50%, 15%, 35%.

Question: We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal—point 1—to extremely conservative—point 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale?



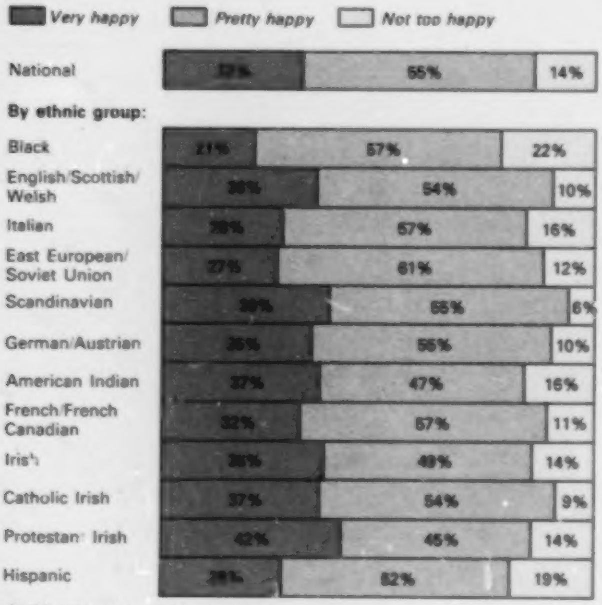
Note: 1982, 1983, 1984 combined. Catholic German/Austrian = 19%, 47%, 34%; Protestant German/Austrian = 18%, 43%, 40%. For American Indian, N = 83.

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys. Jewish response = 39%, 28%, 33%.

Satisfaction

. . . WITH LIFE

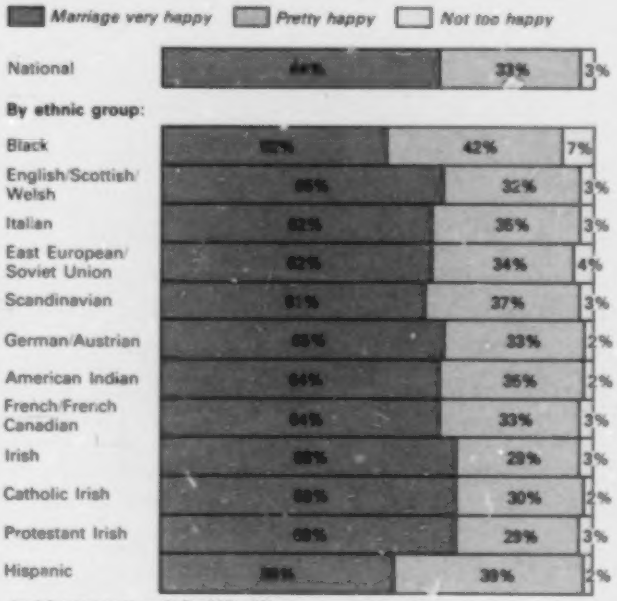
Question: Taken all together, how would you say things are these days—would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?



Jewish responses = 33%, 55%, 12%.

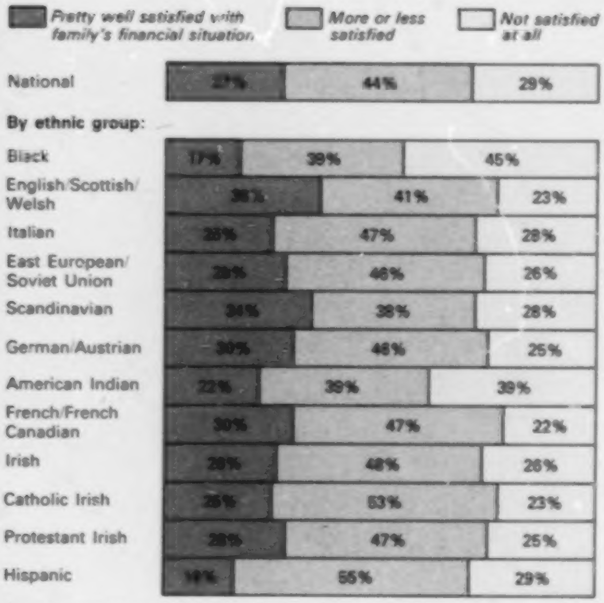
. . . WITH MARRIAGE

Question: Taking things all together, how would you describe your marriage? Would you say that your marriage is very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?



Jewish responses = 61%, 33%, 5%.

. . . WITH FINANCIAL SITUATION



Jewish responses = 42%, 40%, 18%.

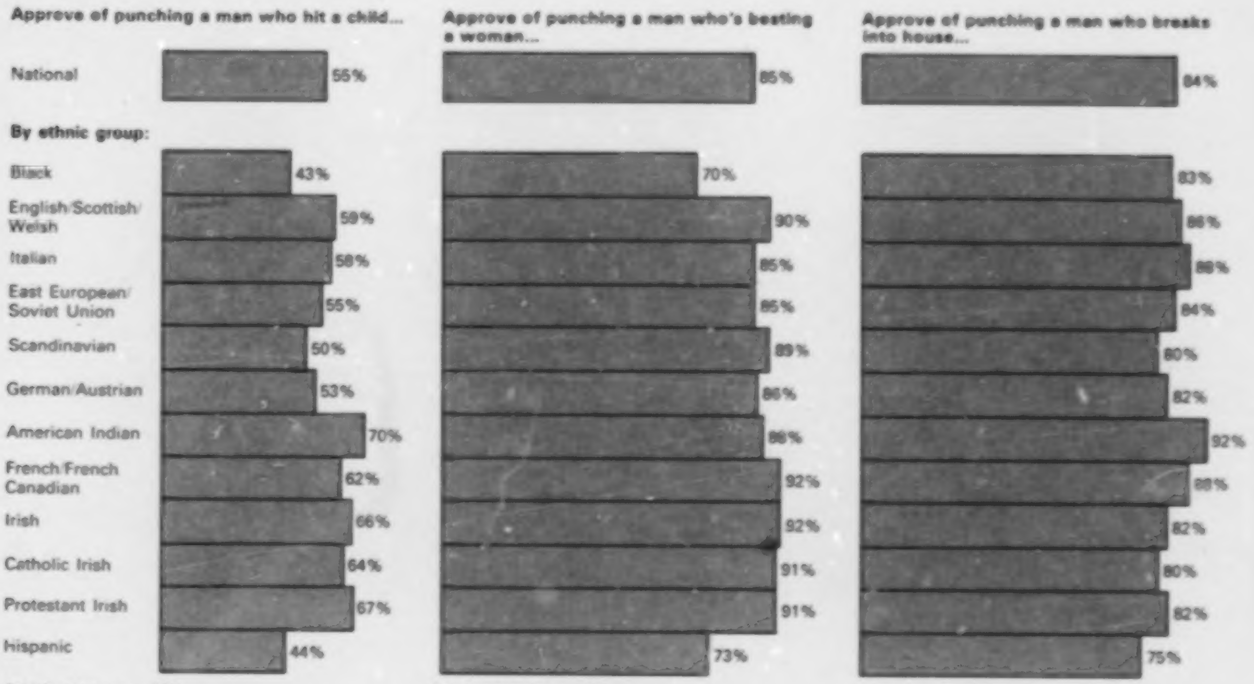
Question: We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. So far as you and your family are concerned, would you say that you are pretty well satisfied with your present financial situation, more or less satisfied, or not satisfied at all?

Note: 1982, 1983, 1984 combined.

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

Cultural

Question: Are there any situations that you can imagine in which you would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger? Would you approve of a man punching a stranger who: . . . Had hit the man's child after the child accidentally damaged the stranger's car? . . . Was beating up a woman and the man saw it? . . . Had broken into the man's house?

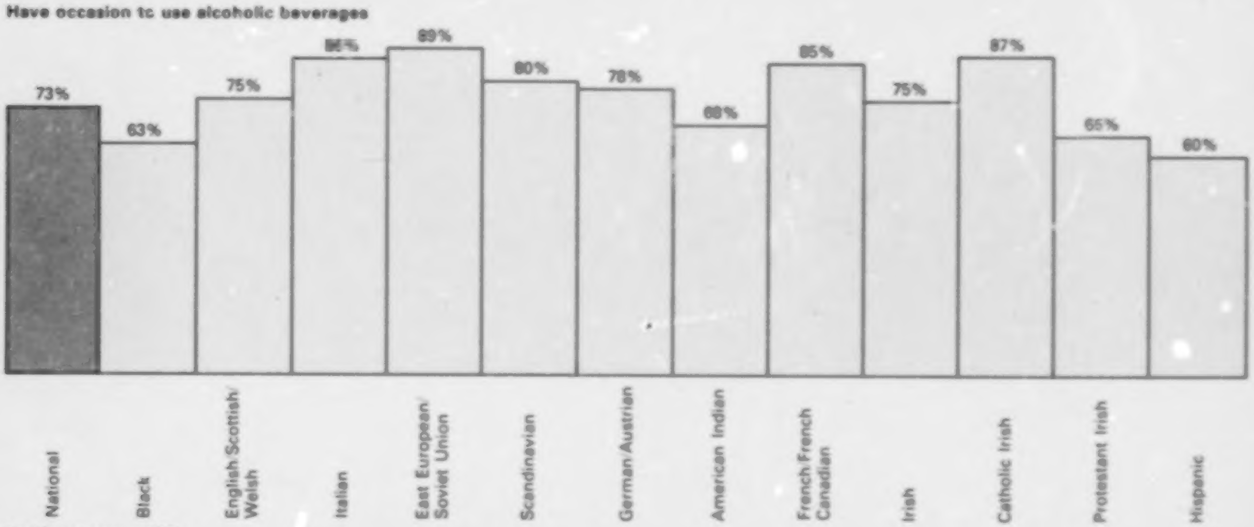


Jewish response = 63%.

Jewish response = 90%.

Jewish response = 87%.

Question: Do you ever have occasion to use any alcoholic beverages such as liquor, wine, or beer, or are you a total abstainer?



Jewish response = 85%.

Note: 1980, 1983, 1984 combined.

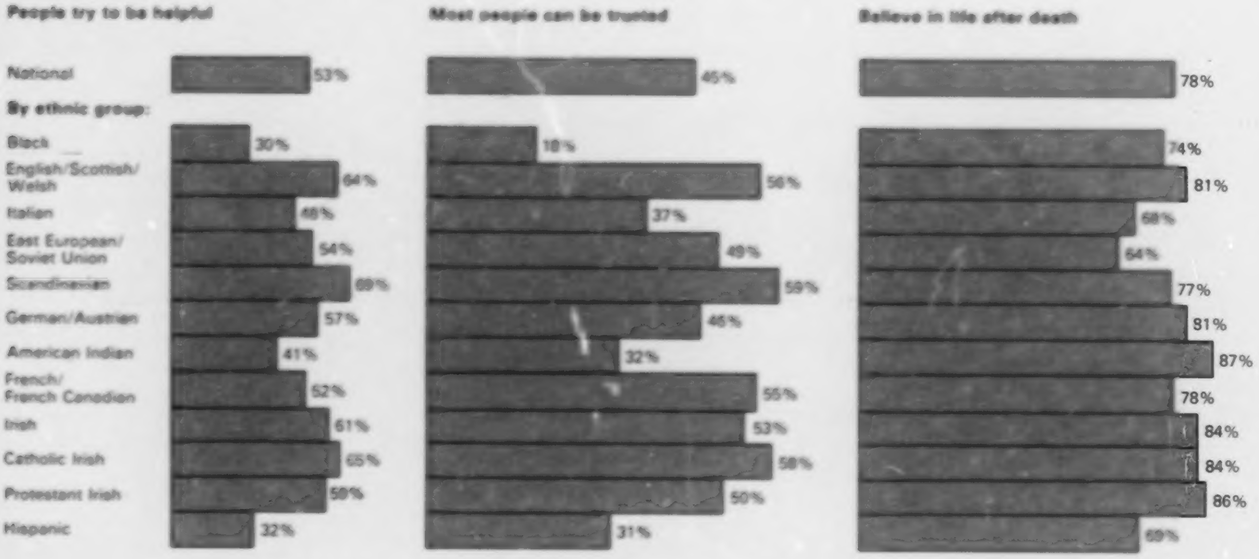
Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

Attitudes

Questions: Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful, or that they are mostly just looking out for themselves?

Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

Do you believe in life after death?

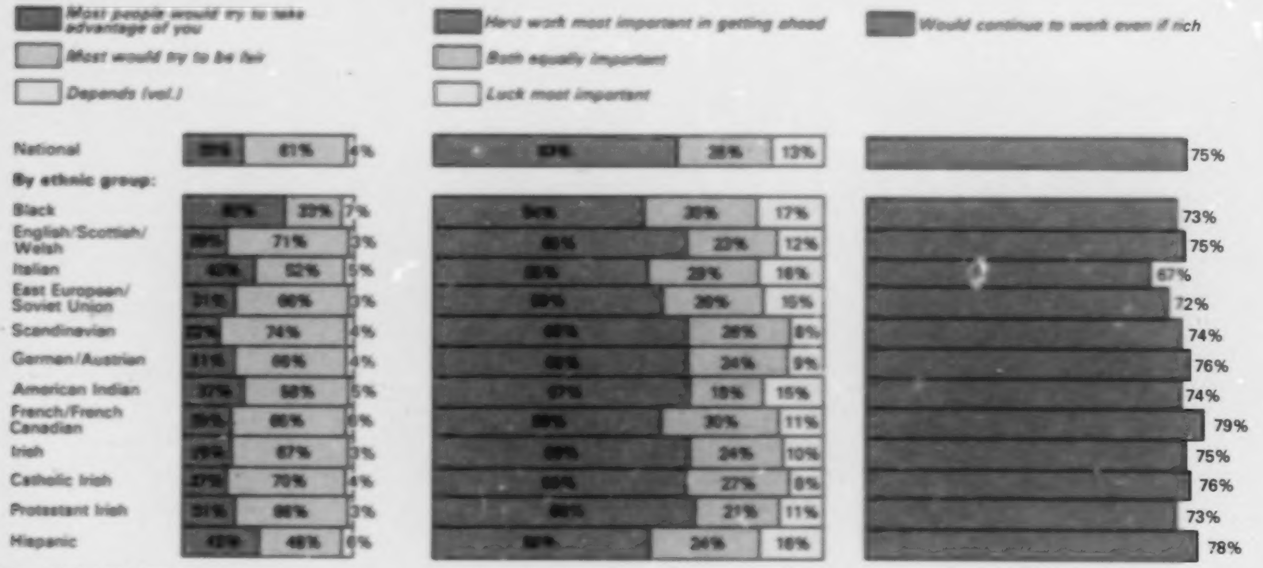


Note: 1980, 1983, 1984 combined.

Questions: Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or would they try to be fair?

Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important?

If you were to get enough money to live as comfortably as you would like for the rest of your life, would you continue to work or would you stop working? (Asked of those currently working or temporarily not at work.)



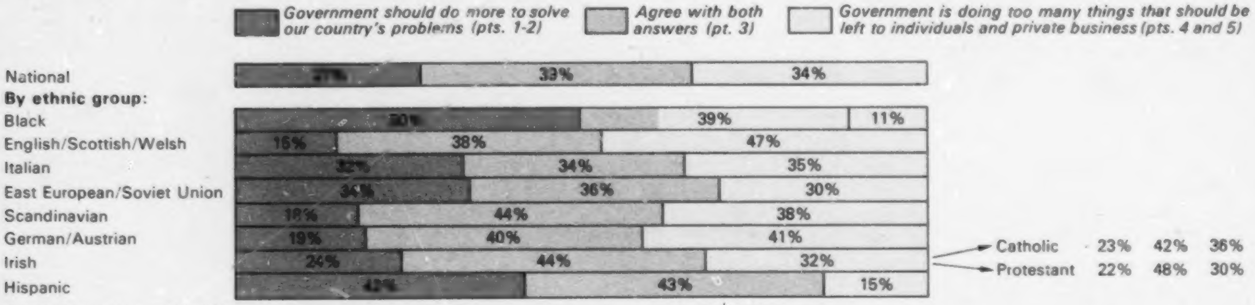
Note: 1980, 1983, 1984 combined.

Note: 1980, 1982, 1984 combined.

Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

Role of

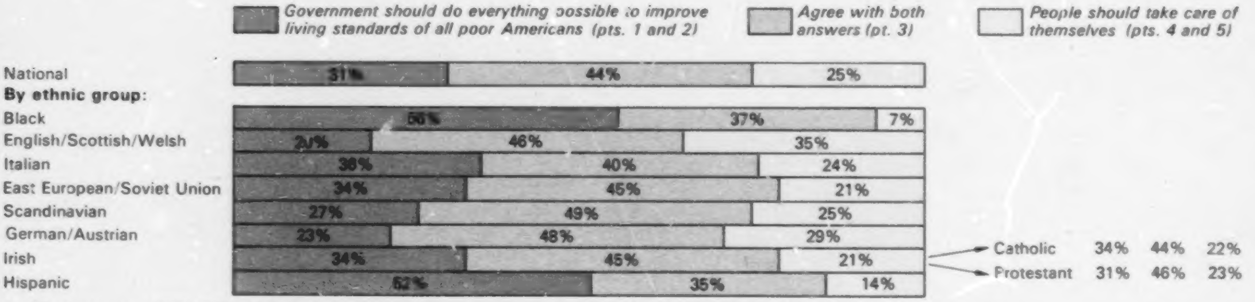
Question: Now look at Card OO. Some people think that the government in Washington is trying to do too many things that should be left to individuals and private businesses. Others disagree and think that the government should do even more to solve our country's problems. Still others have opinions in between. . . . Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?



Jewish responses = 31%, 45%, 24% (N=70).

Note: 1983 and 1984 combined. French/French Canadian = 20%, 36%, 43%. N = 80.

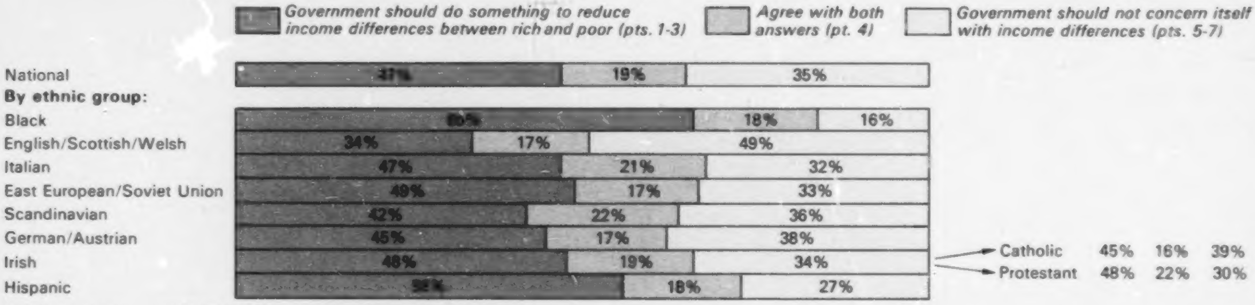
Question: I'd like to talk with you about issues some people tell us are important. Please look at Card NN. Some people think the government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans; they are at Point 1 on this card. Other people think it is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself; they are at Point 5. . . . Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?



Jewish responses = 29%, 52%, 20% (N=70).

Note: 1983 and 1984 combined. French/French Canadian = 23%, 55%, 23%. N = 84.

Question: Some people think that the government in Washington ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising the taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor. Others think that the government should not concern itself with reducing this income difference between the rich and the poor. Here is a card with a scale from 1 to 7. Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the government ought to reduce income differences between rich and poor, and a score of 7 meaning that the government should not concern itself with reducing income differences. What score between 1 and 7 comes closest to the way you feel?

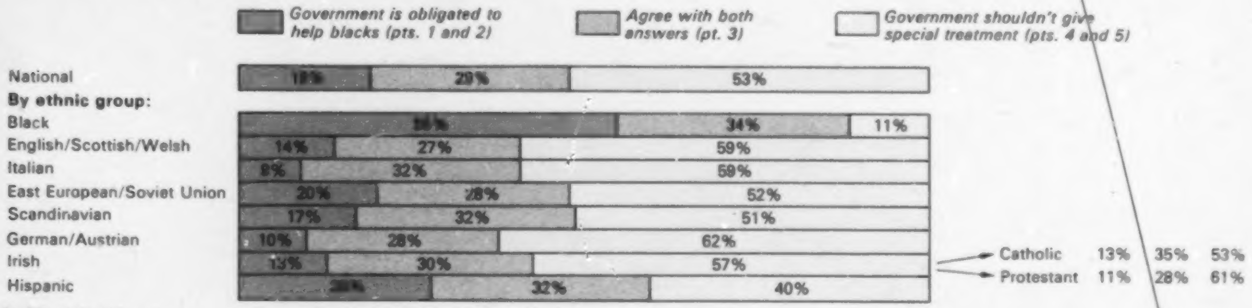


Jewish responses = 33%, 21%, 46%.

Note: 1980, 1983, and 1984 combined. French/French Canadian = 49%, 18%, 33%; American Indian = 44%, 20%, 36%.

Government

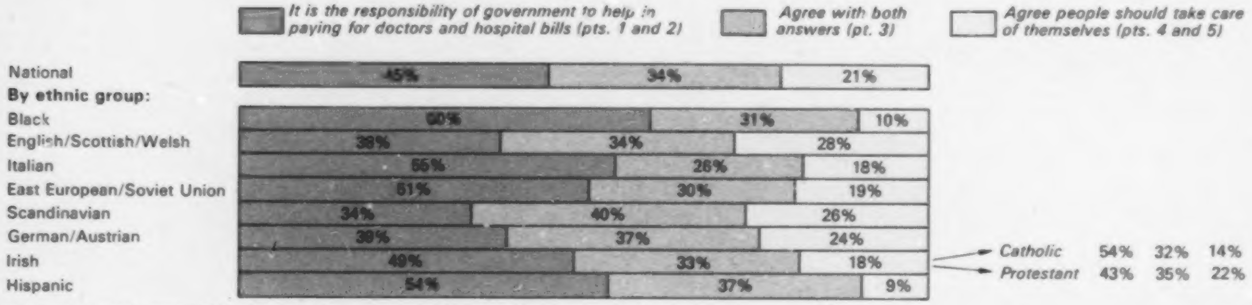
Question: Now look at Card QQ. Some people think that (Blacks/Negroes) have been discriminated against for so long that the government has a special obligation to help improve their living standards. Others believe that the government should not be giving special treatment to (Blacks/Negroes). . . . Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?



Jewish responses = 29%, 52%, 20% (N=70).

Note: 1983 and 1984 combined. French/French Canadian = 13%, 34%, 53%. N = 85.

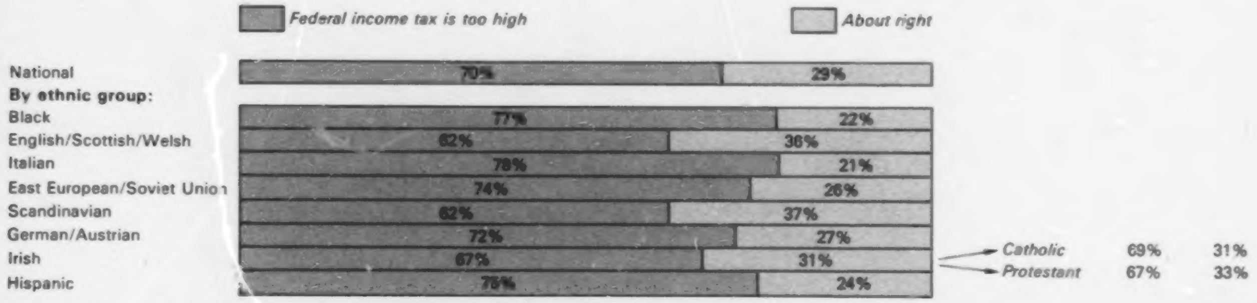
Question: Look at Card PP. In general, some people think that it is the responsibility of the government in Washington to see to it that people have help in paying for doctors and hospital bills. Others think that these matters are not the responsibility of the federal government and that people should take care of these things themselves. . . . Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?



Jewish responses = 57%, 25%, 18% (N=70).

Note: 1983 and 1984 combined. French/French Canadian = 46%, 38%, 16%. N = 85.

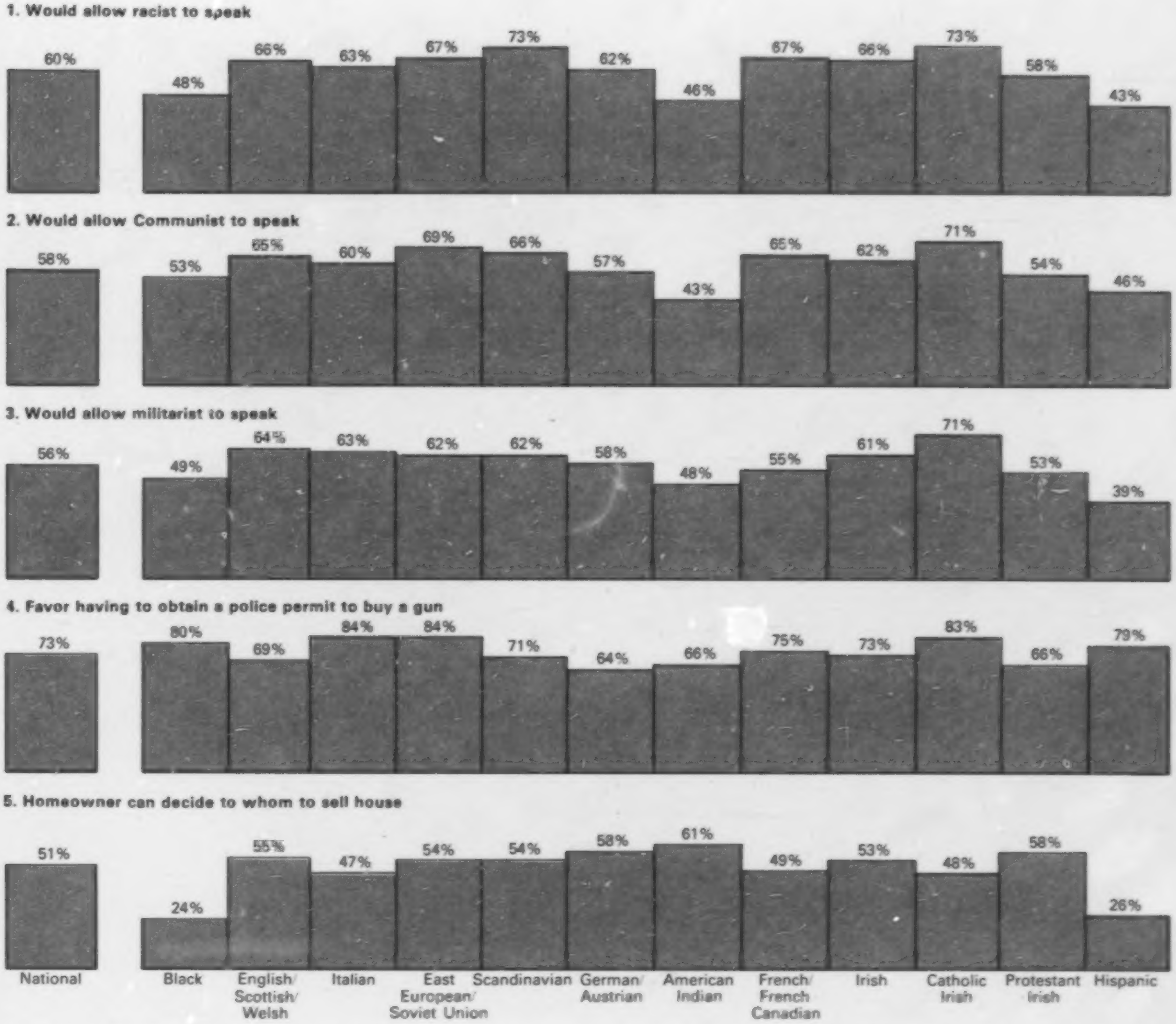
Question: Do you consider the amount of federal income tax which you have to pay as too high, about right, or too low?



Jewish responses = 78%, 21% (N=70).

Note: "Too low" and "Pay no income taxes (vol.)" not shown. 1980, 1982, and 1984 combined. French/French Canadian = 61%, 39%; American Indian = 76%, 24%.

Social



Jewish responses for question 1. 66% (N=97) 2. 81% (N=97) 3. 67% (N=97) 4. 92% (N=97) 5. 45% 6. 81% 7. 78% 8. 82% 9. 15% (N=81).

1. There are always some people whose ideas are considered bad or dangerous by other people. . . . Or, consider a person who believes that Blacks are genetically inferior. If such a person wanted to make a speech in your community claiming that Blacks are inferior, should he be allowed to speak, or not? (1980, 1982, 1984 combined)

2. . . . Now I should like to ask you some questions about a man who admits he is a Communist. Suppose this admitted Communist wanted to make a speech in your community. Should he be allowed to speak, or not? (1980, 1982, 1984 combined)

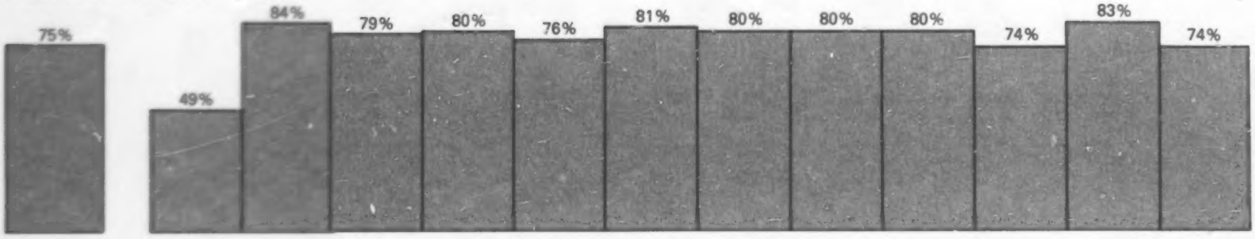
3. . . . Consider a person who advocates doing away with elections and letting the military run the country. If such a person wanted to make a speech in your community, should he be allowed to speak, or not? (1980, 1982, 1984 combined)

4. Would you favor or oppose a law which would require a person to obtain a police permit before he or she could buy a gun? (1980, 1982, 1984 combined)

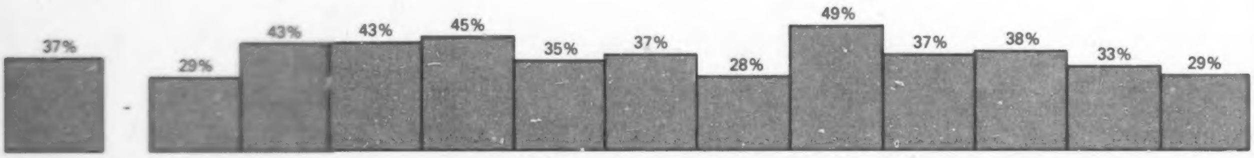
5. Suppose there is a community-wide vote on the general housing issue. There are two possible laws to vote on. One law says that a homeowner can decide for himself whom to sell his house to, even if he prefers not to sell to Blacks. The second law says that a homeowner cannot refuse to sell to someone because of their race or color. Which law would you vote for? (1980, 1983, 1984 combined)

Issues

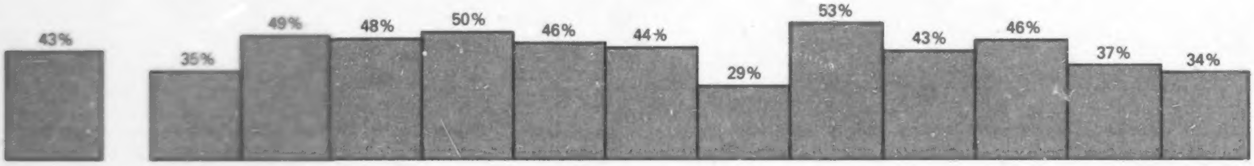
6. Favor death penalty for murder



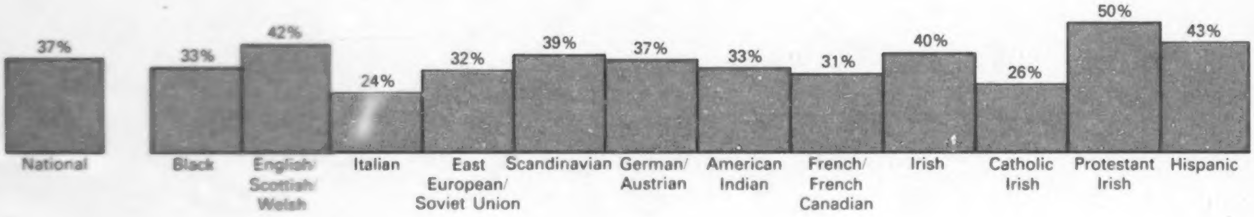
7. Yes, a woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion for any reason



8. Yes, a pregnant woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion if she is married and does not want any more children



9. Premarital sex always/almost always wrong



6. Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder? (1982, 1983, 1984 combined)

7. Please tell me whether or not you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if the woman wants it for any reason? (1982, 1983, 1984 combined)

8. Please tell me whether or not you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if she is married and does not want any more children? (1982, 1983, 1984 combined)

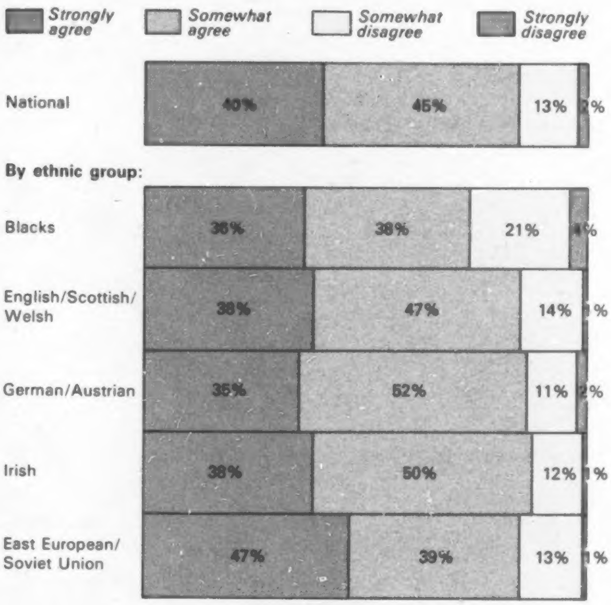
9. There's been a lot of discussion about the way morals and attitudes about sex are changing in this country. If a man and a woman have sex relations before marriage, do you think it is always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all? (1982, 1983 combined)

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

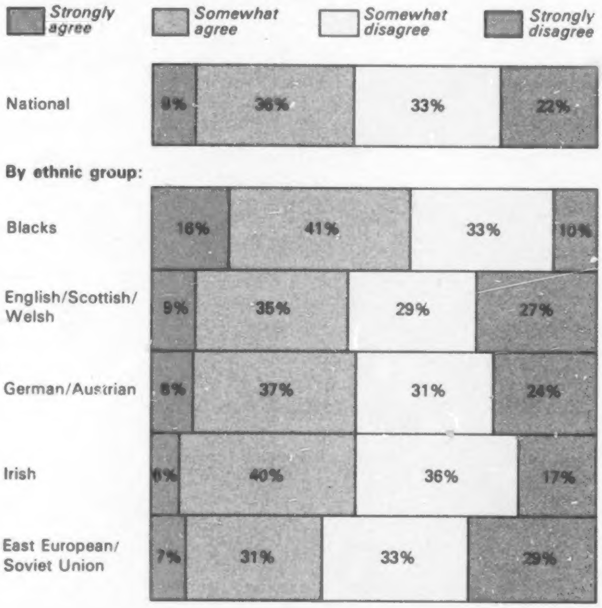
Opportunity

Question: Here are different opinions about social differences in this country. Please tell me for each one whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. (Read each statement.) . . .

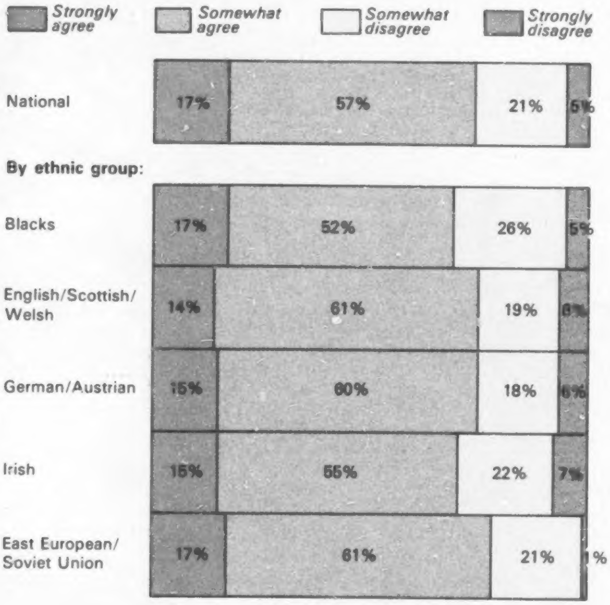
. . . America has an open society. What one achieves in life no longer depends on one's family background, but on the abilities one has and the education one acquires.



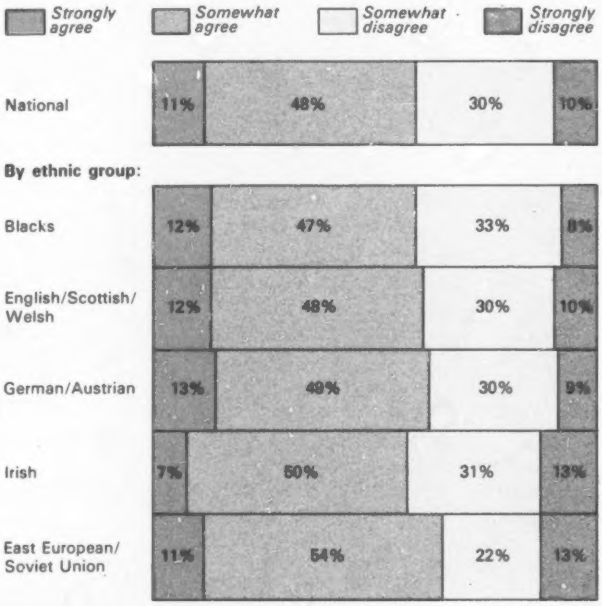
. . . In the United States there are still great differences between social levels, and what one can achieve in life depends mainly upon one's family background.



. . . Differences in social standing between people are acceptable because they basically reflect what people made out of the opportunities they had.



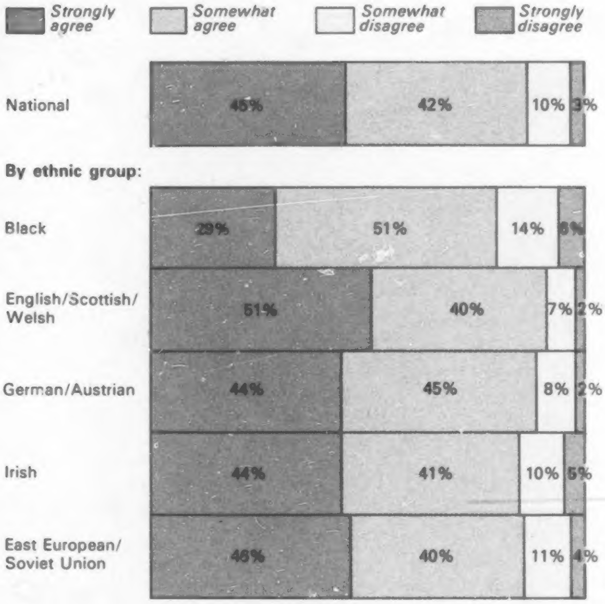
. . . Only if differences in income and social standing are large enough is there an incentive for individual effort.



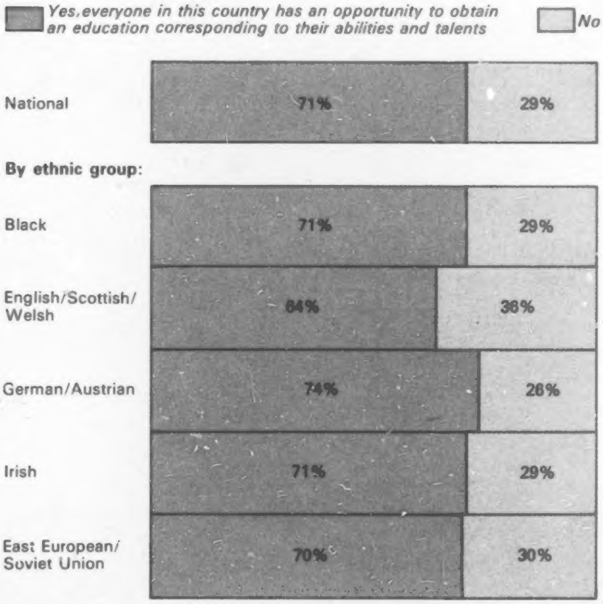
Note: The questions we show here were asked by NORC for the first time in 1984. Because it isn't possible in these cases to combine responses from several surveys we have a very limited number of cases for one ethnic group: there were just 88 respondents of East European/Soviet background.

Question: On these cards are some opinions about the government and the economy. For each one, I'd like you to tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. . . .

. . . All in all, one can live well in America.

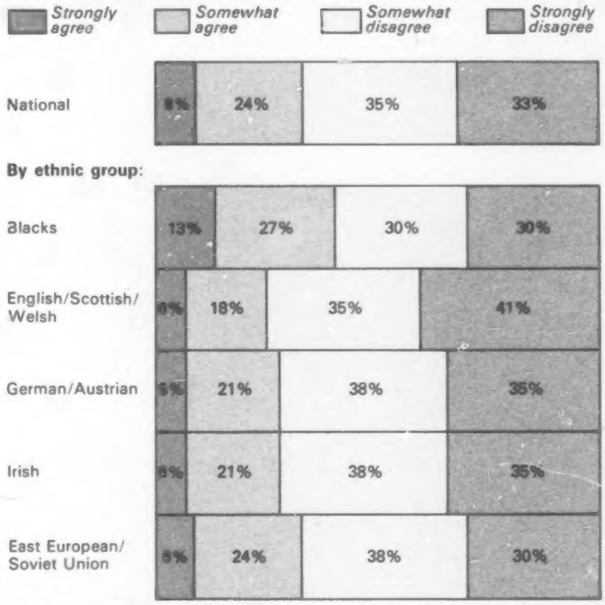


Question: Does everyone in this country have an opportunity to obtain an education corresponding to their abilities and talents?

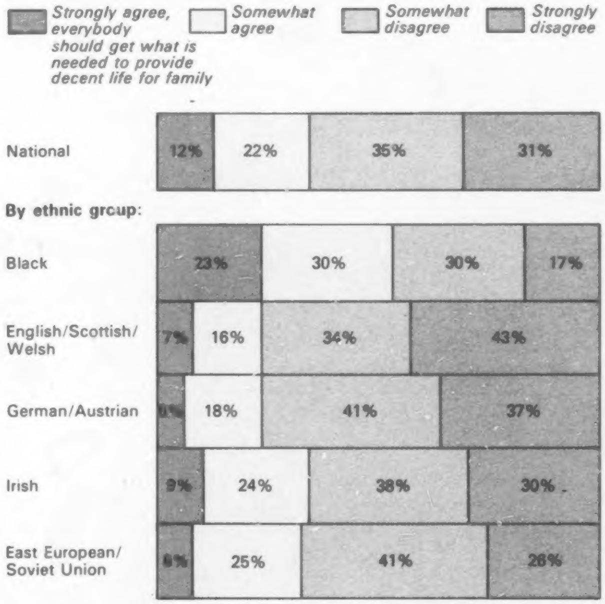


Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys.

. . . In our society everyone must look out for himself. It is of little use to unite with others and fight for one's goals in politics or in unions.



Question: Here are different opinions about social differences in this country. Please tell me for each one whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. . . . Personal income should not be determined solely by one's work. Rather, everybody should get what he/she needs to provide a decent life for his/her family.

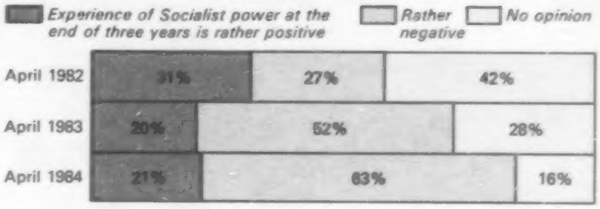


OPINION ROUNDUP

FRANCE UNDER THE SOCIALISTS

AN ADMINISTRATION IN TROUBLE

Question: Three years ago, the left came to power. On the whole, would you say that the experience of socialist power in France at the end of three years is rather positive or rather negative?

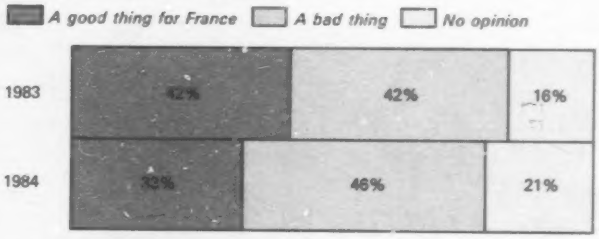


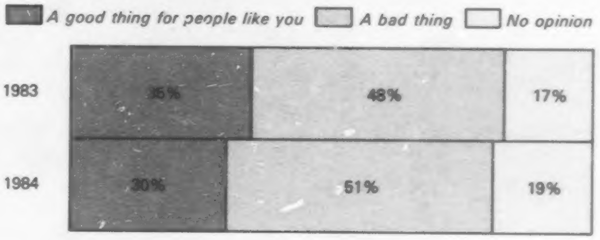
Source: Surveys by Brulé Ville Associés (BVA) conducted for *Paris Match*, latest that of April 16-22, 1984.

Public Opinion Senior Editor Everett Ladd's article on current opinion in France appears on page 16

Question: All in all, would you say that the election of François Mitterrand was a good or bad thing for . . . France? . . . People like you?

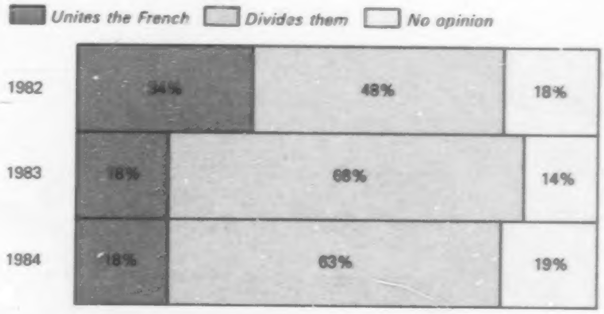
Mitterrand's election has been...

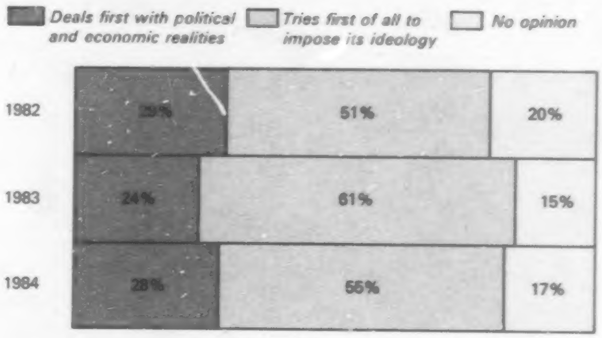




Question: Would you say that the socialists' rule: . . . Unites the French or divides them? . . . Deals first with political and economic realities or tries first of all to impose its ideology? . . .

The Socialist power...

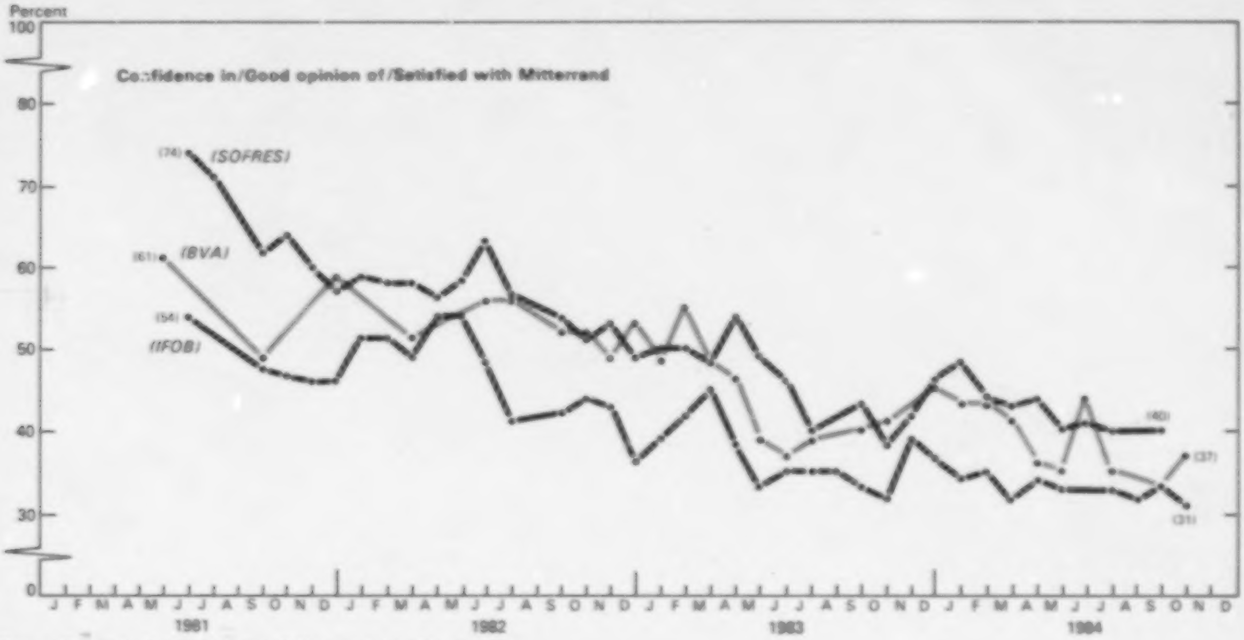




Source: Surveys by BVA for *Paris Match*, latest that of April 16-22, 1984.

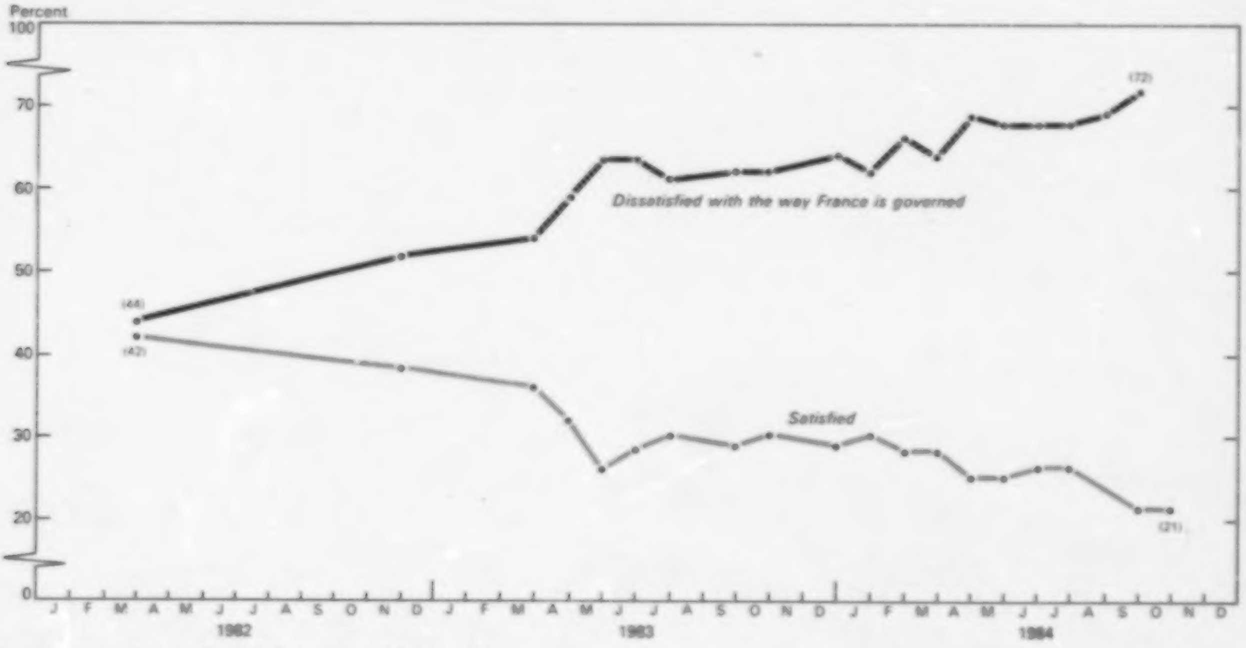
Approval of the President and the Government

Question: Do you have complete confidence, not very much confidence, or no confidence at all in François Mitterrand to resolve the problems facing France today? (SOFRES) What is your opinion of Mr. François Mitterrand as President of the Republic? (BVA) Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with Mr. François Mitterrand as President of the Republic? (IFOP)



Source: Surveys by Sofres, BVA, and IFOP, latest that of October 1984.

Question: Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way France is governed?

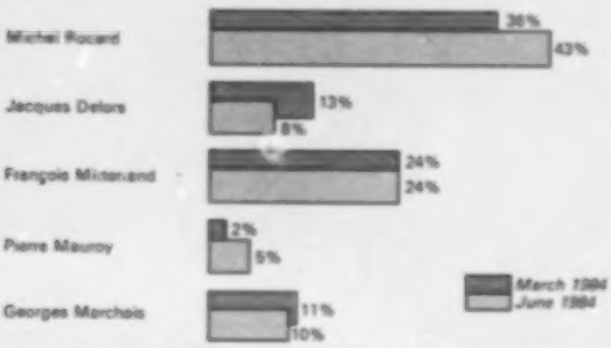


Source: Survey by BVA, for *Paris Match*, latest that of October 1984.

What's Ahead?

Question: Among the following personalities, which one would be the best candidate to represent the Majority party in the case of a presidential election?

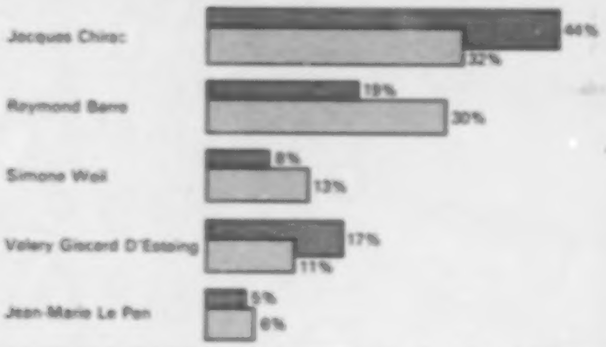
Government supporters' choice for best candidate



Note: The national responses were 40% Rocard, 14% Delors, 12% Mitterrand, 4% Mauroy, 3% Marchais.

Question: Among the following personalities, which one would be the best candidate to represent the Opposition party in the case of a presidential election?

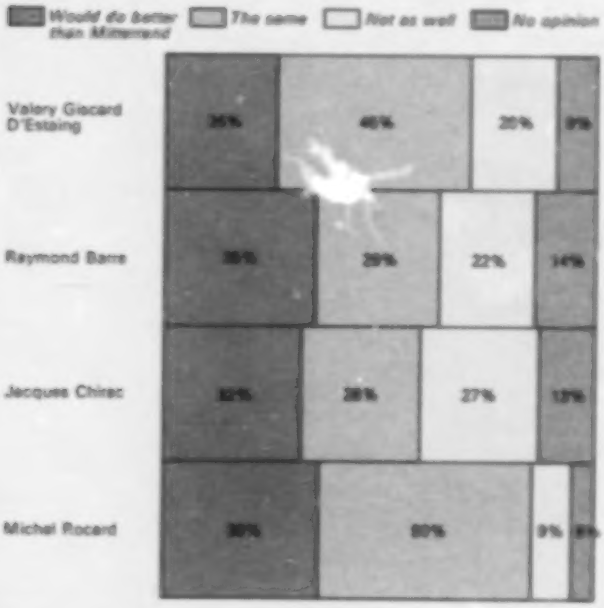
Opposition party supporters' choice for best candidate



Note: The national responses were 21% Chirac, 22% Barre, 14% Veil, 11% Giscard D'Estaing, 4% Le Pen.

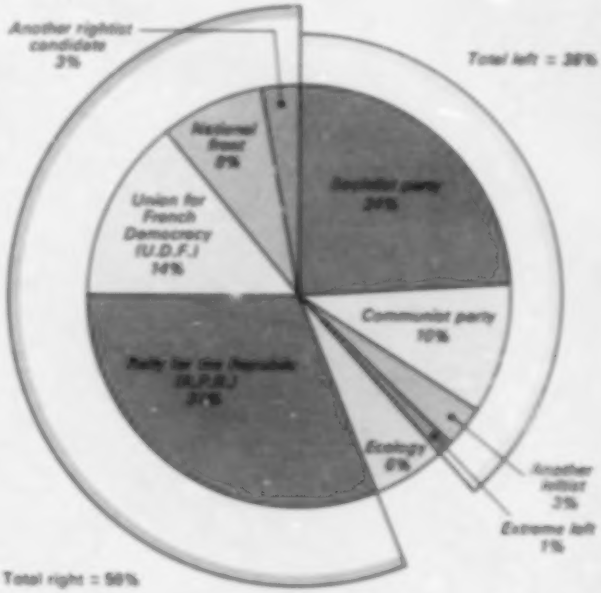
Source: Surveys by BVA for *Paris Match*, latest that of June 23-29, 1984.

Question: Do you think that if he were president of the Republic, (name candidate) would do better, not as well, or about the same as Mr. François Mitterrand?



Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, June 23-29, 1984.

Question: Suppose that next Sunday new legislative elections would be held and that the following parties would be represented in your district. For which of these parties would there be the greatest probability of your voting if you had to choose next Sunday?

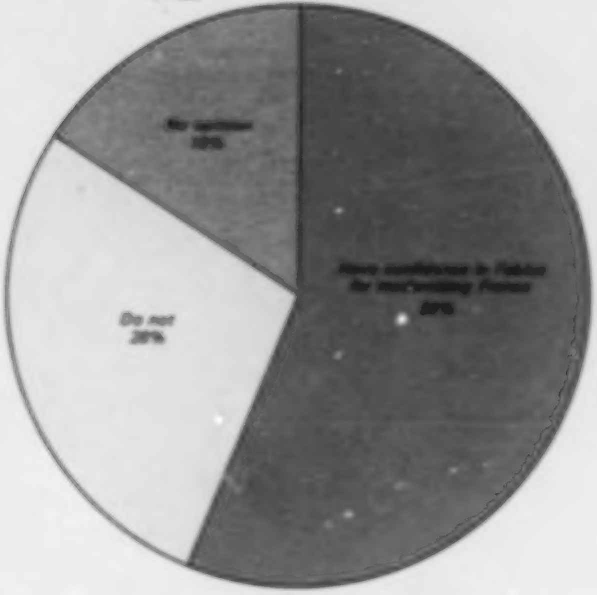


Note: The total vote for the right has gone from 47% in January to 56% in June. The total vote for the left has gone from 51% to 38% in the same period.

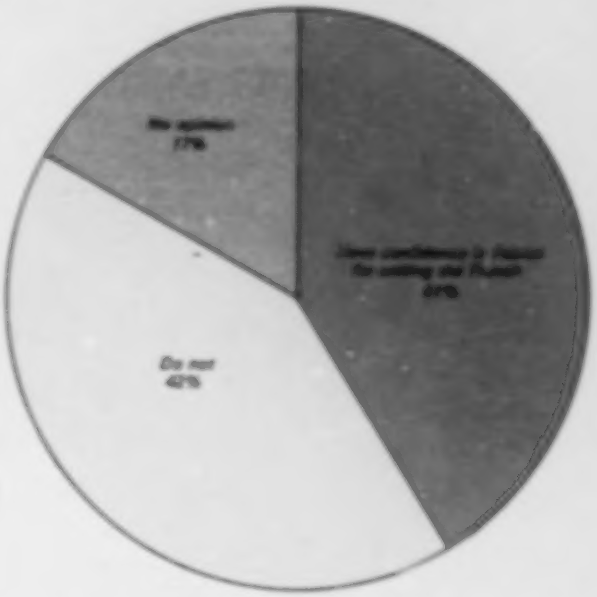
Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, June 23-29, 1984.

ENTER LAURENT FABIUS

Question: Do you have confidence in Laurent Fabius? . . . For modernizing France? . . . For uniting the French?



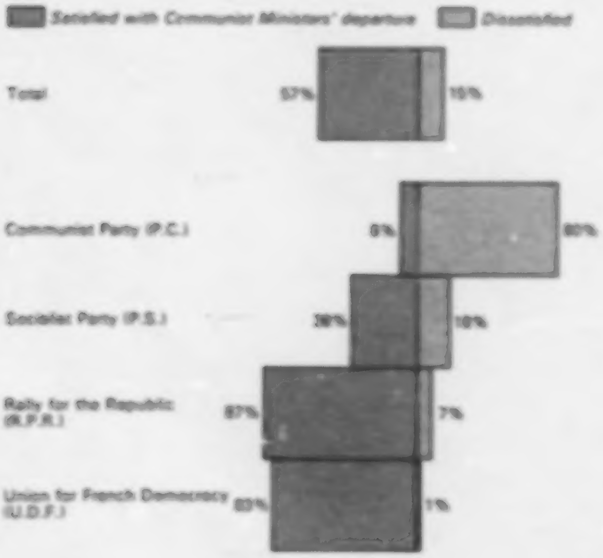
Question: Do you find that Laurent Fabius speaks the traditional language of politicians or that he speaks a new language?



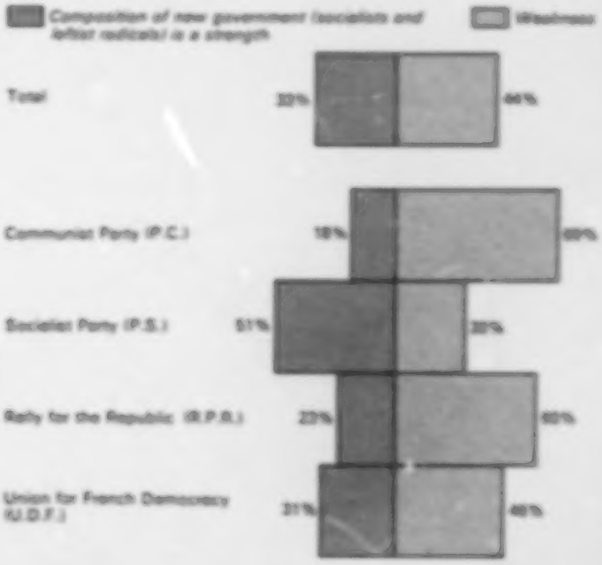
Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, August 21-23, 1984.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE COMMUNISTS

Question: Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the departure of the Communist Ministers?



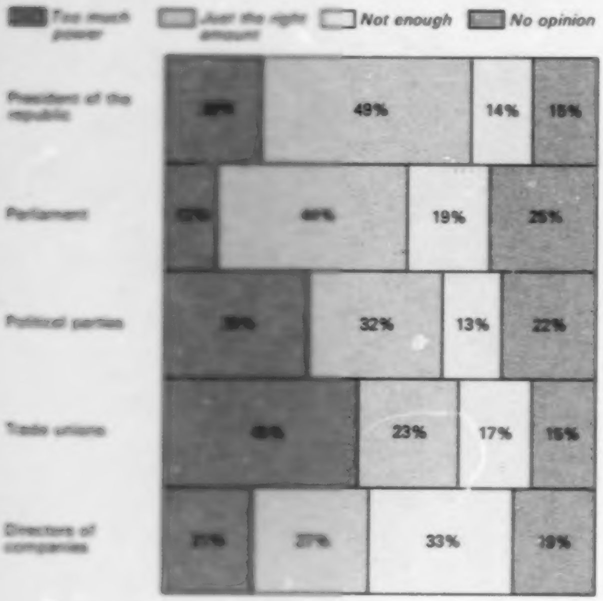
Question: The new government now includes only socialists and leftist radicals; for you, is this a strength or a weakness?



Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, August 21-23, 1984.

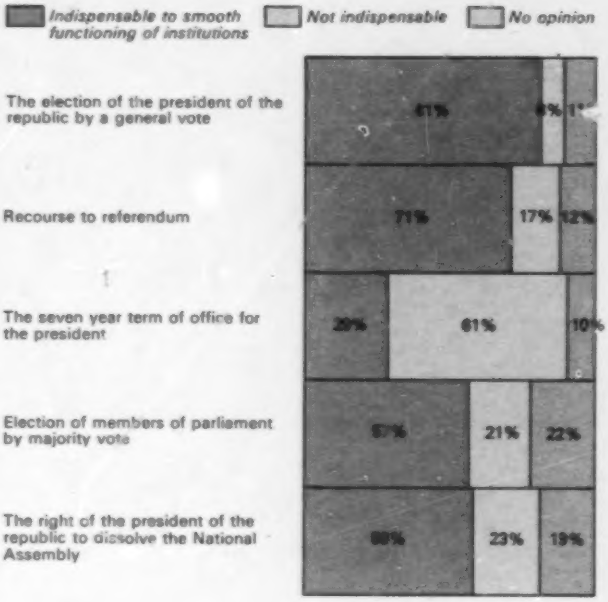
REGIME STILL STRONG

Question: At present, do you think that the . . . has [have] too much power, not enough power, or just the right amount of power?



Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, July 19, 1984.

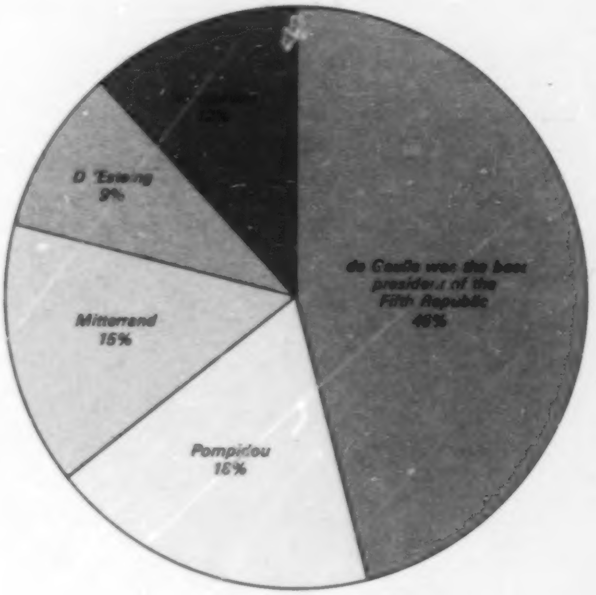
Question: I am going to cite different elements of institutions of the Fifth Republic. Tell me for each one of them if you think it is indispensable to the smooth functioning of our institutions?



Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, July 19, 1984.

VIVE DE GAULLE!

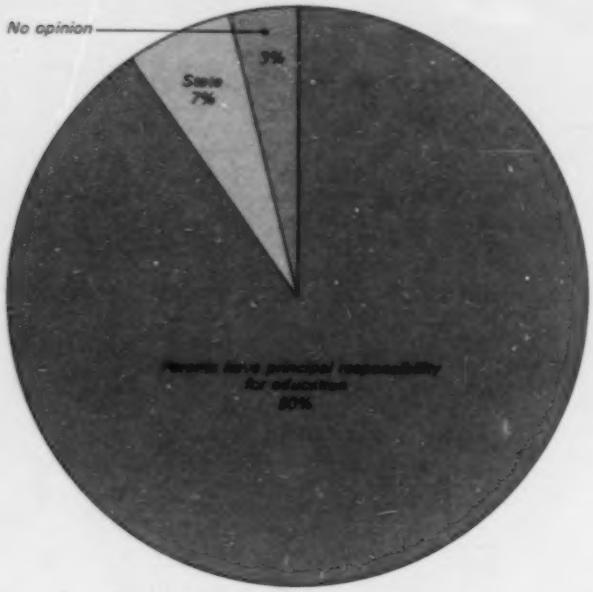
Question: In your opinion, who was the best president of the Fifth Republic?



Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, May 10, 1984.

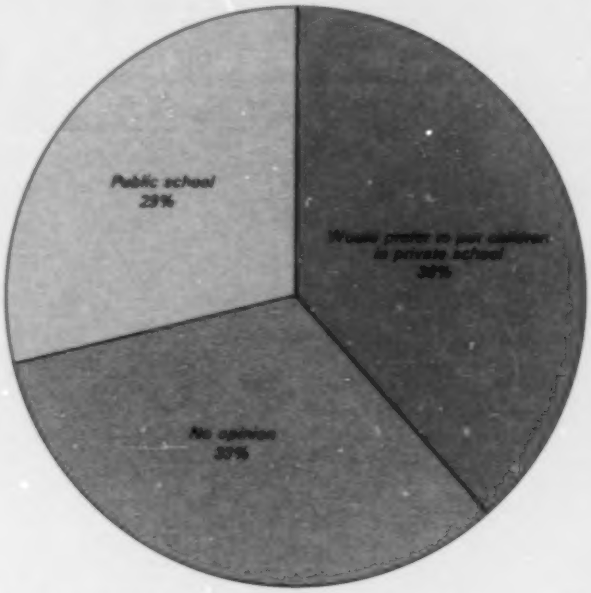
EDUCATION IN FRANCE: THE PUBLIC'S VIEW

Question: In your opinion, who has the principal responsibility for the education of children?



Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, May 30, 1984.

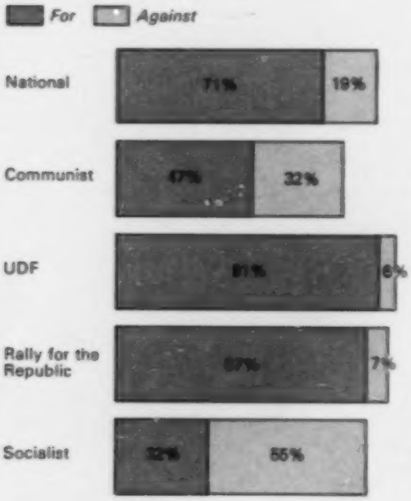
Question: If you had a choice, would you put your children in a public or private school?



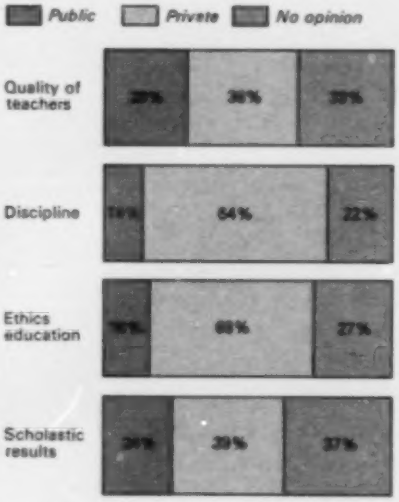
Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, September 29, 1983.

In 1981, the French Socialist party proposed a law to replace the country's current educational system of public schools and government-supported private Catholic schools with a government-run lay educational system. Although the plan has been modified, it continues to generate intense controversy in France.

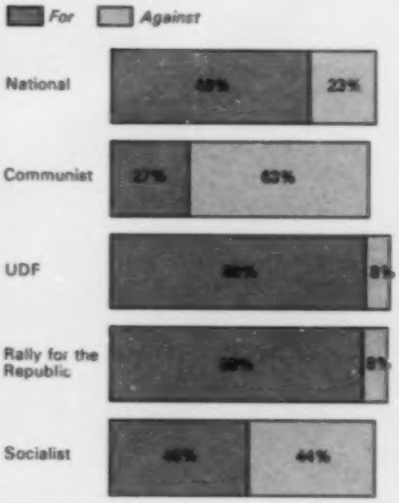
Question: Are you for or against the existence of private education in France?



Question: Between public and private schools, which one, in your view surpasses the other concerning . . .:



Question: Are you for or against maintaining public aid to private schools?



Source: Survey by BVA for *Paris Match*, September 29, 1983.

SEE HOW

REAGAN VS. MONDALE TRIAL HEATS

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH		APRIL	
GALLUP (registered voters) Trial Margin Date	48R 47M 1R (1/13-16)	52R 42M 10R (2/10-13)	50R 45M 5R (3/2-6)	52R 44M 8R (3/16-19)	54R 41M 13R (4/6-9)	52R 44M 8R (4/11-15)
HARRIS (likely voters)	54R 42M 12R (1/12-15 + 2/9-11)		55R 41M 14R (3/1-3)	57R 37M 20R (3/15-17)		
ABC News/ *Washington Post* (registered voters)	49R 46M 3R (1/12-17)	50R 45M 5R (2/13-15)				
PENN + SCHOEN/ *GARTH ANALYSIS* (registered voters)		54R 38M 16R (2/8-12)				
CBS News/ *New York Times* (registered voters)	48R 32M 16R (1/14-21)	49R 37M 12R (2/21-25)	50R 33M 17R (3/5-8)	51R 31M 20R (3/21-24)	48R 35M 13R (4/23-26)	
ROPER (certain registered voters)			47R 40M 7R (3/17-24)			47R 40M 7R (4/18-28)
Los Angeles Times (registered voters)		50R 42M 8R (2/4-9)				53R 41M 12R (4/28-5/3)
TIME/ YANKELOVICH (registered voters)	51R 41M 10R (1/31-2/2)					
GORDON BLACK/ *USA TODAY*		57R 35M 22R (2/17-21)	54R 34M 20R (3/2-6)	54R 35M 19R (3/13-17)		54R 39M 15R (4/26-5/2)
GALLUP/ *NEWSWEEK* (registered voters)			54R 42M 12R (3/1-2)			
NBC News (likely voters)			60R 34M 26R (3/8-11)			

THEY RAN

		DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION JULY 16-19	REPUBLICAN CONVENTION AUGUST 20-23	
MAY	**JUNE**	**JULY**	**AUGUST**	**SEPTEMBER**
50R 48M 4R (5/3-5) 53R 42M 11R (5/18-21)	53R 44M 9R (6/6-8) 56R 37M* 19R (6/22-25)	53R 39M 14R (7/13-16) 53R 41M* 12R (7/27-30)	52R 41M* 11R (8/10-13)	55R 40M* 15R (9/7-9)
	56R 41M 15R (6/7-11)	52R 44M 8R (7/2-7) 50R 48M* 2R (7/20-24)	54R 42M* 12R (8/5-9) 55R 40M* 15R (8/24-25)	55R 42M* 13R (9/5-9)
51R 43M 8R (5/16-22)		51R 44M 7R (7/5-8)		56R 40M* 16R (9/7-11)
	52R 39M 13R (6/12-17)			
	50R 35M 15R (6/23-28)	52R 34M 18R (7/12)	54R 38M* 16R (8/5-9)	57R 35M* 22R (9/12-16)
48R 40M 8R (5/29-6/3)		49R 40M 9R (7/7-14)		52R 37M* 15R (9/15-22)
			59R 36M* 23R (8/25-30)	
			53R 39M* 14R (8/7-9)	61R 31M* 30R (9/11-13)
58R 35M 23R (5/29-6/1)				57R 35M* 22R (9/4-11)
		49R 43M* 6R (7/12-13) 46R 48M* 2M (7/19-20)		57R 39M* 18R (9/6-9)
		60R 33M* 27R (7/8-10)	58R 35M* 23R (8/12-14)	62R 32M* 30R (9/9-11)

Note: Unless otherwise noted, samples were of adults nationwide and question referred to Reagan vs. Mondale.

* = Reagan/Bush vs. Mondale/Ferraro.

	SEPTEMBER*				OCTOBER*			NOVEMBER*	
Gallup	57R 39M 18R (9/21-24)	56R 39M 17R (9/28-30)		58R 38M 20R (10/15-17)			57R 40M 17R (10/26-28)	59R 41M 18R (11/2-3)	
Harris	55R 42M 13R (9/21-25)			53R 44M 9R (10/12-14)		56R 42M 14R (10/22-23)	58R 40M 18R (10/26-29)	55R 43M 12R (11/1-3)	
ABC/*WP*		55R 37M 18R (9/22-10/2)	55R 37M 18R (10/2-7)	56R 41M 15R (10/8-9)	54R 42M 12R (10/12-16)	54R 42M 12R (10/22-23)		57R 39M 18R (10/29-11/1)	54R 40M 14R (11/3-5)
P+S/Garth									
CBS/*NYT*		59R 33M 26R (9/30-10/4)	58R 38M 20R (10/9)	59R 33M 26R (10/14-17)	56R 40M 16R (10/21)	56R 37M 19R (10/23-25)		58R 37M 21R (10/31-11/3)	
Roper								53R 43M 10R (10/27-11/3)	
LAT			57R 39M 18R (10/4-6)	56R 39M 17R (10/12-14)					
Time/YSW						54R 30M 24R (10/22-24)			
GB/*USAT*		60R 35M 25R (9/25-10/1)		61R 36M 25R (10/14-18)	61R 34M 27R (10/21)	59R 36M 23R (10/25-27)		60R 35M 25R (11/1-4)	
G/*N*						57R 40M 17R (10/22-24)			
NBC				60R 35M 25R (10/14-16)			58R 34M 24R (10/26-28)		

Note: There are two additional Gallup points not shown on this chart. In June and early July they were 51R 43M (6/29-7/2) and 54R 38M (7/6-9).
*All questions on this page included vice presidential candidates.

(Continued from page 16)

level of criticism. Sixty-three percent of those polled last April said that the Socialists had served to divide the French, while only 18 percent thought Socialist rule had been unifying. Opinion polls taken over the last three years show a sharp, largely uninterrupted decline in President Mitterrand's personal popularity or standing with the French electorate—a decline that has continued into this fall (see page 33).

The flip side of the government's weakness is the opposition's strength. In June 1984, BVA asked a national sample how they would vote in an election for the French Parliament if one were to be held immediately. Fifty-six percent said they would vote for one of the opposition parties of the right, and only 38 percent for the Socialists, Communists, or a minor left party. More people would vote for the Rassemblement pour la Republique (RPR, the Gaullist alliances led by Jacques Chirac), than for any other party.

The Communists have experienced a long-term loss of support, and now their backing in the French electorate is just half as great as it was during the Fourth Republic (1946 - 1958). Their losses among blue-collar workers are striking. According to data from the big national exit poll taken by BVA following the June 1984 vote for representatives of the European Parliament, only one-fourth of the workers would vote Communist in the next elections for Parliament (see table 1). More is at work here, of course, than just a decline of Communist sentiment in France. In general, class lines in voting are weakening. Only 60 percent of the workers interviewed in the June exit poll said they would vote for *any* party of the left in the next parliamentary election. A similar disintegration of working-class solidarity is evident in recent elections in Britain, where the Labour party has seen a marked erosion of its working-class, trade union base.

Looking to shift direction in economic policy and convey a new face to the electorate, Mitterrand appointed a number of new ministers in the spring of 1984. The most important change was to install Laurent Fabius as prime minister instead of Pierre Mauroy. Just thirty-seven years old, and speaking the language of managerial expertise rather than that of traditional Socialist ideology, Fabius was initially well received by the French public. Sixty-seven percent told BVA interviewers in August of 1984 that his youth was an advantage, compared to just 14 percent who felt it was a handicap. Fabius is the first French head of government to be born after the war. By a margin of two-to-one, respondents felt that Fabius spoke a "langage nouveau" rather than a "langage traditionel des hommes politiques." Vive la différence!

The most interesting finding of the polling on the recent controversy over education and church schools in France (see page 37) is the similarity of the French response to what we see in the area of public versus private education here in the United States. French citizens certainly aren't unsupportive of public education, but they think the public schools just aren't doing as good a job as they should. Majorities or pluralities of the French give an edge to the private schools in discipline, in the quality of teachers, in instruction on ethics, and in overall achievement. ☑

Table 1

BULL/BVA EXIT POLL
VOTE INTENTION FOR NEXT LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS IN FRANCE

Would vote:	Extreme left	Communist party	Socialist party	M.R.G.	Ecologie	R.P.R.	U.D.F.	Extreme right
Total	2.1%	11.9%	25.2%	1.9%	4.5%	33.4%	14.6%	6.4%
By sex:								
Men	2.6	14.4	24.7	2.0	3.8	30.6	13.9	8.0
Women	1.6	9.5	25.7	1.9	5.1	36.2	15.2	4.9
By age:								
18-24 years old	2.3	11.0	26.1	1.5	9.4	26.4	16.0	7.3
25-34	3.8	—	—	1.9	5.1	28.0	11.6	6.2
35-49	2.3	12.9	—	2.2	5.0	32.4	13.8	7.1
50-64	1.3	—	—	—	3.8	36.3	14.4	6.9
65 and older	1.0	—	—	—	—	38.9	16.4	4.8
By profession:								
Farmer	1.7	7.6	11.4	1.4	2.1	49.7	17.3	8.9
Self-employed	1.1	4.5	15.6	2.1	4.3	42.7	19.8	9.9
High level professional/managerial	4.6	5.1	23.1	3.1	3.4	37.6	17.0	6.1
Middle management	3.7	8.7	28.6	2.3	5.3	30.7	13.6	7.1
White collar	3.1	13.3	27.7	1.6	4.2	29.2	12.7	8.1
Blue collar	2.5	24.4	33.5	1.6	4.6	20.1	8.1	5.2
Service	1.6	18.6	32.2	1.5	7.3	22.9	6.5	9.4
Student	1.9	9.4	25.3	2.0	10.4	25.9	17.9	7.1
Retired	1.0	11.3	23.6	2.2	2.7	38.1	16.2	5.0
Unemployed	1.2	9.2	23.2	1.3	5.3	36.9	17.3	5.5
By vote in last presidential election:								
Mitterrand	3.7	23.3	50.8	2.9	4.8	7.4	3.1	4.0
Giscard d'Estaing	0.5	1.0	2.1	0.8	2.5	59.7	26.3	7.2
Did not vote	1.8	9.5	14.3	2.7	11.0	33.8	14.1	12.7

Note: 7,500 randomly chosen voters as they left 250 representative polling places in metropolitan France on the day of the vote for the European Parliament.

Source: Survey by BULL/BVA, June 17, 1984.

by Andrew Kohut and Nicholas Horrock

Generally Speaking: Surveying the Military's Top Brass

For many American professional military officers, a federal courtroom in New York City has become another battlefield of the Vietnam War. In this room, four-star General William Westmoreland, a former paratrooper with decorations from three wars, is trying to convince a jury that CBS damaged his reputation. The network charged in a January 1982 documentary that Westmoreland had manipulated intelligence reports on enemy strength.

The legal issues of the case are relatively narrow. Two years ago, more than a decade after United States combat troops left South Vietnam, CBS aired a program in which a group of military and Central Intelligence Agency analysts said that estimates of enemy troop strength made at Westmoreland's Saigon headquarters were intentionally reduced in 1967 and early 1968 to make it appear the war was going better than it was. Indeed, according to several of these officials, the figure for Vietcong and North Vietnamese forces being reported to Washington was only half—about 275,000—of the more than half a million fighters they estimated the Communists had in South Vietnam.

Several of these officers said they believed General Westmoreland wanted these figures held down so as not to erode public and administration confidence that the United States could win the war. Westmoreland filed a $120 million libel suit, claiming the CBS charges were untrue, that CBS had known them to be untrue, and that his reputation and honor as an American officer had been tarnished.

In American officers clubs, wardrooms, and Pentagon staff meetings, however, the case has taken on a far broader meaning. The men who run the United States military today were the battalion commanders, squadron leaders, and flotilla officers of General Westmoreland's command a decade and a half ago. They have carried the onerous burden of having fought the only war America lost, even though they had won battle after battle.

To many of them, a victory for William Westmoreland in that New York court will go beyond simply proving that CBS was in error; it will substantiate their belief that most American news reporting during the war itself was misleading, hostile to American interests, and contributed to the loss of the American people's confidence.

Last February, *Newsweek* magazine set out to study beliefs of the American officer corps in the 1980s. As part of the project, the magazine commissioned the first private independent poll of active military officers. Between June 18 and 24, 1984, the Gallup organization interviewed by telephone 257 generals and admirals, more than one out of every four active flag officers stationed in the United States. Generals and admirals from all four service branches participated—93 Army, 56 Navy, 94 Air Force, 14 Marines. The survey covered 110 officers with one star, 113 with two stars, and 34 with three or four stars.

This landmark study quantifies two important phenomena: First, the nearly three million members of the armed forces (including 300,000 officers) are now headed almost exclusively by Vietnam War veterans; 88 percent of the top military echelon served in Vietnam.

Perhaps as a consequence, 59 percent of the officers interviewed in this poll had an unfavorable view of the news media, and disapproval was stronger among men who have "operational assignments," that is, those who would deal with combat.

The *Newsweek*/Gallup poll painted a rich and detailed picture of these top military executives. Though a military commission has long been viewed as a road to upward social mobility, it was still stunning to find that 75 percent of the admirals and generals reported that their social class today is higher than that of their parents' family.

Not unexpectedly, these top military executives were satisfied with the military as a profession. Majorities said they were "totally satisfied" with the amount of access to superiors (69 percent), the occupational training they receive (70 percent), the opportunity for higher education (58 percent), and their training and preparation for carrying out wartime assignments (61 percent).

But graduates of the military service academies registered less job satisfaction than their colleagues from other educational backgrounds. Only 25 percent of the academy graduates were very satisfied, while 45 percent rated the military as less satisfactory. This seemed to underscore several impressions about changes in the professional military: the service academies have lost some of the lock they once had on the higher echelon posts, yet they still imbue their graduates with greater expectations of success than officers coming from civilian schools.

The poll found military executives dissatisfied with their pay (70 percent), the amount of time they must spend on routine tasks (69 percent), the amount of job stress they experience (53 percent), and the reliability of the vast new high-tech equipment they must use (42 percent).

They relieved these problems and kept trim by jogging (66 percent), playing golf (38 percent), or a racquet sport (37 percent). Their leisure lives seem to reflect the middle-class, small-town heritage that most of them shared. The admirals and generals preferred "easy listening" music (54 percent) over classical (27 percent) or country and western (19 percent); they read novels (54 percent), worked on home repair projects (55 percent), and got their news from a daily paper (65 percent).

General Views

The *Newsweek*/Gallup survey challenges many popular conceptions about attitudes held by America's military leadership. In the post-Vietnam era, the stereotype of the military's thinking on politics and public affairs has been a blend of Curtis Lemay and M*A*S*H 4077's gung-ho generals. In contrast, what emerged from the poll was a right-of-center Republican group that made temperate political evaluations and expressed cautious, moderate views on military policy.

Of course, like most segments of the population, generals and admirals make political evaluations that reflect their self-interest and professional orientation. The principal gauge of political attitudes was the extent to which they thought a political personality or institution believed in military preparedness and power. The answers ranged from Ronald Reagan at the high end (97 percent favorable rating on his support for preparedness) to Jimmy Carter and the nuclear freeze movement at the low end, rated favorably by only 15 percent and 8 percent, respectively. These extremes are noteworthy, but more surprising were those evaluations that fell in the middle.

The women's movement, a symbol of social change and liberalism, had virtually as many supporters (42 percent) as critics (47 percent) among the military's upper echelon, yet so did a longstanding presumed favorite of the top brass, Richard Nixon. The former president's favorable rating of 46 percent just about tied the 44 percent positive evaluation this basically Republican group gave the Congress. It is not surprising that the news media got low marks (32 percent) from flag-rank officers, but the ultraconservative Moral Majority fared no better (31 percent).

The survey clearly indicated that members of America's military establishment think alike when they evaluate the proponents and opponents of military power, but their views diverge rather surprisingly in other areas. The correlates of the military's sociopolitical beliefs are as surprising as the *amount* of diversity observed. Age does not matter—younger (fifties) and older generals (sixties) differ little in their political views—but rank does. Officers with three or four stars tend to hold more moderate views than their more conservative one- or two-star counterparts. Generals and admirals who were educated at the military academies were apt to be somewhat more liberal in their political thinking than those who received their education at other universities. The notable exception is that academy graduates had a less favorable opinion of the women's movement—perhaps because of its impact on their alma maters.

By and large, generals and admirals who came from more modest family backgrounds were the toughest on liberal political figures and institutions. Interestingly, unlike other branches, Marine generals held a positive opinion of the news media—perhaps because it has traditionally helped the Corps sustain its public image.

Giving Peace a Chance

While the poll portrayed the U.S. military leadership as holding somewhat more diverse political/social opinions than anticipated, it showed a uniformity of thinking on geopolitics and military power.

American generals and admirals shared the Reagan administration's assessment that the country's military defenses are stronger today than they were four years ago. Ninety-five percent believed that was the case. This estimation was much more positive than that of the population as a whole—more positive, actually, than was found among Reagan's most ardent supporters in the population at large.

The nation's highest ranking military officers were equally positive in their belief that there is more support at home for the armed forces (97 percent) and greater respect abroad for the United States (80 percent) than has been the case in recent years.

The Reagan administration's emphasis on strengthening the military has probably also affected the generals' and admirals' view about the likelihood of war compared to four years ago. Forty-five percent believed there is less chance today that American military forces will become involved in a war, and only 8 percent think

Table 1
GENERALS AND ADMIRALS ON NUCLEAR WAR

Scary Attitudes		Wary Attitudes		Mixed
	36%		51%	13%*
Feel there could be a winner in a nuclear war and could justify a first strike.	10**	There could not be a winner; could not wage tactical nuclear war; could not justify a first strike.	21	
Could not be a winner but could justify first strike.	16	Could not be a winner; could not justify first strike but feel we can wage tactical nuclear war.	30	
Could not justify first strike but feel there could be a winner.	10			

Note: *Percent expressing "don't know" on one or more questions.
**The true hard core among this group (6%) also feel the horror of nuclear war is exaggerated by the nuclear freeze movement.

Table 2
NUCLEAR WAR ATTITUDE CLASSIFICATION

	Scary	Wary	Mixed	Number of Interviews
All generals and admirals	36%	51%	13%	(257)
Age:				
Under 50	34	51	15	(74)
50 and over	37	51	12	(183)
Rank:				
1 star	35	53	13	(110)
2 stars	40	45	15	(113)
3 or 4 stars	29	65	6	(34)
Branch:				
Army	32	53	15	(93)
Navy	30	63	7	(56)
Air Force	45	42	13	(94)
Service Academy Graduate:				
Yes	27	60	13	(95)
No	41	46	13	(162)
Ideology:				
Most conservative	40	46	14	(115)
Conservative	28	58	14	(102)
Moderate liberal	39	53	8	(36)
Career Satisfaction:				
Most	32	60	8	(84)
Middle	36	50	14	(93)
Least	44	42	15	(80)

that the chances have increased. They also believed that chances of avoiding a nuclear war are better today than they were four years ago. A majority (51 percent) think that there is less chance of a nuclear war today, while only 3 percent believe there is a greater chance.

The comfort taken by the military leadership from Reagan administration policies and from the generally more positive political evaluations of the 1980s was evident in the way the top brass assessed the possibilities of conflict in various trouble spots around the world.

Only the possibility of a major conventional war in the Middle East that draws in the superpowers led a majority (66 percent) to express a great deal or a fair amount of concern. Less than a majority—but still a substantial proportion—said they were concerned about U.S. forces being drawn into open conflict in Central America (42 percent) or a conventional attack against United States and Republic of Korea forces on the Korean peninsula (42 percent). Military respondents to the *Newsweek*/Gallup poll expressed limited concern about a conventional attack by Soviet forces across Europe (26 percent) or a conventional attack by Soviet forces and their Vietnamese allies against their neighbors in the Far East (26 percent).

Concern about nuclear conflict under a variety of circumstances was even more limited. A majority (54 percent) expressed a great deal or a fair amount of concern about only one possibility, a nuclear attack by the Soviet Union growing out of a conventional war at some point. But, the admirals and generals were much less concerned about the possibilities of either a nuclear war resulting from the accidental detonation of a nuclear weapon (15 percent) or a direct nuclear attack by the Soviet Union on the United States (16 percent). Indeed, it is on American-Soviet relationships that generals and admirals most belittled popular conceptions of military thinking. Of the 257 flag-rank officers interviewed, only 16 (6 percent) felt that war with the Russians was inevitable.

Not only do the top brass reject the inevitability of conflict with the Soviets, but also most (58 percent) believe America's military objective should be parity with the Soviets, not superiority (35 percent). Military faith in a balance of power also showed up in the 91 percent who felt the chances of a nuclear war increased more by falling behind the Russians in nuclear weaponry than by escalating the arms race. Demographic breakdowns showed little variation in any of these core attitudes by branch of service, rank, age, political orientation, or any number of other categories. The most basic military geopolitical opinions support a balance of power instead of military superiority (or weakness) vis-à-vis the Soviets.

It is in that light that 88 percent of the top military brass surveyed by *Newsweek*/Gallup rated the nuclear freeze movement unfavorably, while most (59 percent) believed the movement did not exaggerate the horrors of a nuclear conflict (34 percent thought it did).

On other nuclear issues, the vast majority took positions that freeze movement members would either agree with or take comfort from. Most (75 percent) thought there could be no winner in a nuclear war. Sixty-five percent could not imagine circumstances under which they could personally justify a nuclear first strike against the Soviets. Nearly three in four believed the United States and the Soviet Union could engage in conventional war without resorting to nuclear weapons (73 percent).

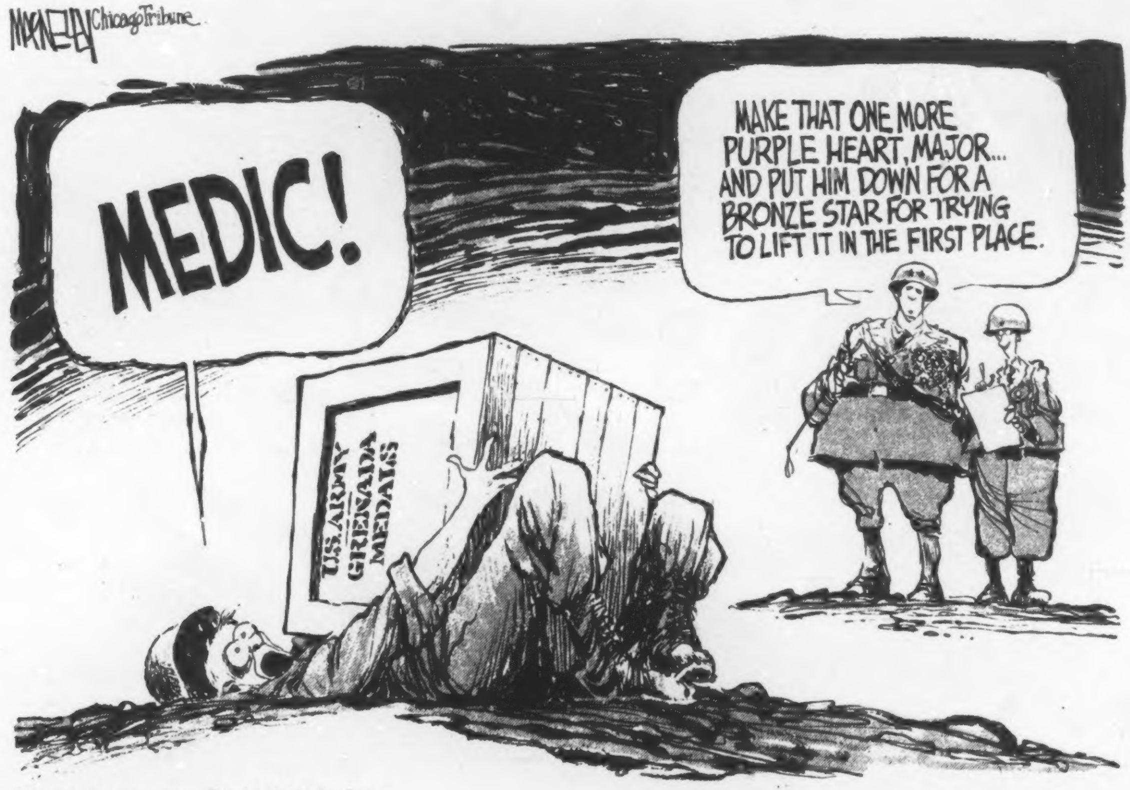
The only majority opinion on nuclear war that the freeze movement would object to was about whether a war with the Soviets could be limited to tactical nuclear weapons (57 percent of the military leaders thought it could, while 37 percent thought such a war would escalate to all-out war).

To understand better how the military elite thinks about issues, Gallup constructed a typology of expressed opinions about nuclear war, which arrayed the military elite on a scale ranging from those who expressed very cautious attitudes about nuclear war ("wary" attitudes) to those who took the most hawkish view about the use of nuclear weapons ("scary" attitudes) (see table 1). Only 10 percent of those polled held the most hard-line views—feeling there could be a winner in a nuclear war and also that there are situations under which a first strike against the Soviets could be justified. The majority of the sample held more moderate views.

Some of the same patterns found in sociopolitical attitudes reappeared in this analysis. Three- or four-star officers were more dovish than their subordinates as were academy graduates and those who were raised in upper socioeconomic families. Hawks—those holding the most hard-line opinions on nuclear war—were found in the Air Force and Marine Corps and among generals and admirals who described their family backgrounds as lower middle class. Curiously, among generals and admirals who were more disenchanted with the military as a profession, there was an appreciably higher rate of "scary" or "hawkish" attitudes. The policy implications of this are unclear, but the correlation of job dissatisfaction with extreme nuclear views is so strong that it stands out as a remarkable and perplexing conclusion to the study.

In these times of greater public support for the military, *Newsweek*/Gallup elite respondents appeared more willing to indulge in self-criticism. As many as 27 percent thought that giving medals for the Grenada invasion was excessive, while a 48 percent plurality believed that the blame for the Beirut massacre rested more with the procedures of the military commanders than with the civilian leadership that had put the Marines in Beirut (21 percent). This suggested a degree of candor that may not have been found in a Vietnam era poll of the military, but it also reflected traditional intraservice rivalries. Army generals placed more blame on the Marine commanders in Beirut for the massacre, while Navy and Marine brass were much more critical of the medal giving in the Grenada operation.

Veterans' Day this year saw stunning displays of patriotism, the touching reunion of those who had fought in Vietnam, and the president warmly welcoming these servicemen home. The nation and the military, it seems, are resting more comfortably together than they have for many years, and with the kind of information supplied by the *Newsweek*/Gallup poll, we can begin to understand the military better just at the moment when we have become more willing to accept them. ☑


MacNELLY Chicago Tribune
MEDIC!
MAKE THAT ONE MORE PURPLE HEART, MAJOR... AND PUT HIM DOWN FOR A BRONZE STAR FOR TRYING TO LIFT IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
U.S. ARMY GRENADA MEDALS

Reprinted by permission, Tribune Media Services.

by Ivor Crewe

Britain Evaluates

Presidential elections are events of significance not only for the United States but also for Britain. The British economy is crucially affected by American interest rates, trade policies, and the dollar exchange rate. British domestic politics are inescapably tied up with U.S. foreign and defense policy. Imagine that democratic institutions reflected the new realities of Anglo-American strategic and economic interdependence and allowed the British to vote in a presidential election. How would the 51st state have voted? A CBS/*New York Times* poll suggested that it would have been neck and neck in Britain (Reagan 34 percent, Mondale 33 percent). But all the other polling evidence consistently shows that Ronald Reagan's campaign for reelection would have resulted in a landslide—a landslide defeat.

Dividing the British and American electorate's view of Ronald Reagan is an enormous confidence gap. The man who spreads reassurance in the United States spreads alarm in his closest European ally. His most recent "presidential rating" in Britain (August 1984) was a deficit of −24 percentage points: 32 percent agreed that he "is proving a good president" but 56 percent did not (see table 1). His presidential rating in three polls earlier in the year average out at 22 percent. Asked whether their opinion of President Reagan has changed recently, five times as many regularly say it has "gone down" (30 percent) as "gone up" (6 percent). On the specifics of his record, especially on international affairs, a May 1984 poll revealed the British public to be deeply skeptical. Only 21 percent believed that he had "seriously tried to halt the nuclear arms race"; 66 percent did not. Only 31 percent agreed that "President Reagan's policies on nuclear weapons are increasing the security of Western Europe"; 55 percent disagreed. Fully 78 percent believed that he should have taken up the Soviet-supported United Nations proposal for a nuclear weapons freeze. Reagan's October meeting with Mr. Gromyko, however, was greeted with a cynical thumbs down. Only 20 percent believed the meeting was "a serious attempt to help world peace"; 66 percent dismissed it as "mostly an election gimmick." In view of this widespread skepticism it is not surprising that when confronted with the straight choice a mere 22 percent wanted Ronald Reagan to be reelected for another term; 67 percent wanted "someone else to become president."

Ronald Reagan's poor standing with the British public is not the result of any particular event or incident. Anglo-American relations have certainly gone through periods of strain during his term, notably over his opposition to the Soviet gas pipeline; the United States's equivocal attitude to Britain's case during the April-June 1982 Falklands War; the installation of cruise missiles in November 1983; and, in the same month, the invasion of Grenada, a member of the British Commonwealth. In all four instances the position of the United States was unpopular, but the impact on Reagan's presidential rating was slight and short-lived. For example, in November 1983 the proportion saying that their opinion of Reagan had "gone down recently" rose to 39 percent compared with 28 percent in the preceding July. But his presidential rating remained the same: −29 percent in July 1983, −27 percent in November 1983. British attitudes toward Reagan have in fact been negative from the very beginning. He had no honeymoon at all: even before his inauguration, in November 1980, his election was regarded as "bad" rather than "good" for America (by 40 percent to 30 percent), for America's standing in the world (by 35 percent to 32 percent) and for peace in the world (by 37 percent to 26 percent) (see table 2). In his first year of office his average "presidential rating" was −4 percent. By 1982

Ronald Reagan

it had slumped to −31 percent, and over the whole of his term it has been −25 percent. There was never a love match in the first place.

Comparison with his predecessors reveals how low Reagan's stock with the British public has fallen. Americans might regard him as more sincere than Nixon, as more relaxed and confident than Carter, but the British, apparently, fail to see those qualities, or if so, regard them as liabilities rather than assets in a president. In November 1972, 60 percent of the British public regarded Richard Nixon's reelection as good for America and 57 percent as good for America's standing in the world; in both cases only 7 percent dissented. Admittedly, these views were given before the full scandal of Watergate emerged. But Jimmy Carter too, on his election, enjoyed more confidence than Reagan among the British. The most telling verdict on Reagan emerges from a longer perspective on American presidents. Asked which presidents, alive or dead, they could name, more mentioned Reagan (76 percent) than any other. But when asked to name the two best American presidents (from a list) Reagan was mentioned by a mere 10 percent, ranking fifth behind not only Kennedy (66 percent), Roosevelt (44 percent), and Eisenhower (26 percent), but even Truman (12 percent), whom only 14 percent could name without prompting. And when asked to name the worst president, the British placed Reagan second only to the disgraced Nixon.

An Unusually Unpopular President

Reagan's very different image on the two sides of the Atlantic presents a puzzle. His most fundamental beliefs are very close to Margaret Thatcher's. Both are committed to rolling back the state; to the free-market economy; to creating an "enterprise culture"; to religion and traditional morality; to a strong nuclear defense; and to national pride and self-confidence. Mrs. Thatcher was reelected only eighteen months ago with a thumping majority, and in the October 1984 polls she remains comfortably ahead of the Labour party. Why, then, should the British reject her ideological twin?

One answer is that the center of political gravity is considerably further to the left in Britain than the United States. If the British gave themselves American party labels, Britain would be a solidly Democratic state. For example, the Kennedy-Nixon contest was a dead heat in terms of the American popular vote, but the British preferred Kennedy to Nixon by a comfortable 56 percent to 44 percent (October 1960). In 1964 Lyndon Johnson won a decisive 61 to 39 percent majority over Barry Goldwater; but in Britain his popular majority was an astonishing 94 to 6 percent (November 1964). Reagan is particularly unpopular among Labour and Alliance supporters in Britain, who between them outnumber Conservatives. But this answer is only part of the explanation. For even among Conservatives Reagan is far from popular: in May 1984 more Conservatives believed that his reelection would be bad than good for America's standing in the world (by 42 to 36 percent) and for peace in the world (by 41 to 36 percent); their presidential rating of Reagan in 1984 averaged a modest +3 percent. And on the crucial test, Reagan fails decisively: by a 57 to 33 percent majority, Conservatives would prefer someone else to be elected president.

A second possible explanation is that the British electorate regards Reagan as good for the United States but bad for Britain. Were that the case there would be no contradiction between the British and American electorate's view of Reagan. But the opposite is closer to the truth. Whereas substantial majorities regarded his reelection as bad for the United States and its standing in

Table 1
BRITISH PUBLIC'S RATING OF REAGAN AND CARTER

Question: Do you think Mr. Reagan (Carter) is or is not proving a good president of the United States?

	Is	Is not	Don't know	Rating
Carter				
1977 (2)	61%	11%	28%	+50
1978 (2)	45	33	22	+12
1979 (4)	38	44	18	− 6
1980 (3)	50	35	15	+15
1977-1980 (11)	47	33	20	+14
Reagan				
1981 (2)	30	34	37	− 4
1982 (4)	27	58	15	−31
1983 (4)	27	60	13	−33
1984 (4)	32	55	13	−23
Feb. 1984	35	55	10	−20
April 1984	29	53	17	−24
June 1984	32	55	12	−23
Aug. 1984	32	56	12	−24
1981-1984 (14)	29	54	17	−25

Note: The number of monthly polls asking the question each year is given in parentheses. The entry for each year is the mean. Sample sizes are 950 to 1,100. The question was first asked in May 1977.

Source: Surveys by Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd.

the world, they were much more sanguine about its effect upon Anglo-American relations: almost as many predicted it would be good (36 percent) rather than bad (40 percent).

The third possible factor is anti-Americanism in Britain. It is argued that as the head of state and the single most publicized American, Reagan and his personal popularity will suffer alongside that of his country. Anti-Americanism among the British public has undoubtedly grown since the birth of the "special relationship" during World War II. In July 1942, seven months after the United States entered the war, the majority of the British took a pro-American position on four propositions: the Americans were more democratic than the British; Britain would be better off if it became more like the United States; it was untrue that the Americans adopted a superior attitude; and it was untrue that Americans let others do the fighting for them. By March 1984 the majority of the British public (excluding don't knows) took the anti-American line on each of the identical four propositions.

This shift of opinion against the United States is not a return to normal anti-American prejudice after a brief, exceptional friendship induced by the war. The change of mood is very recent, a product of the Reagan years. About every quarter since 1970 Gallup has regularly asked "How much confidence do you have in the

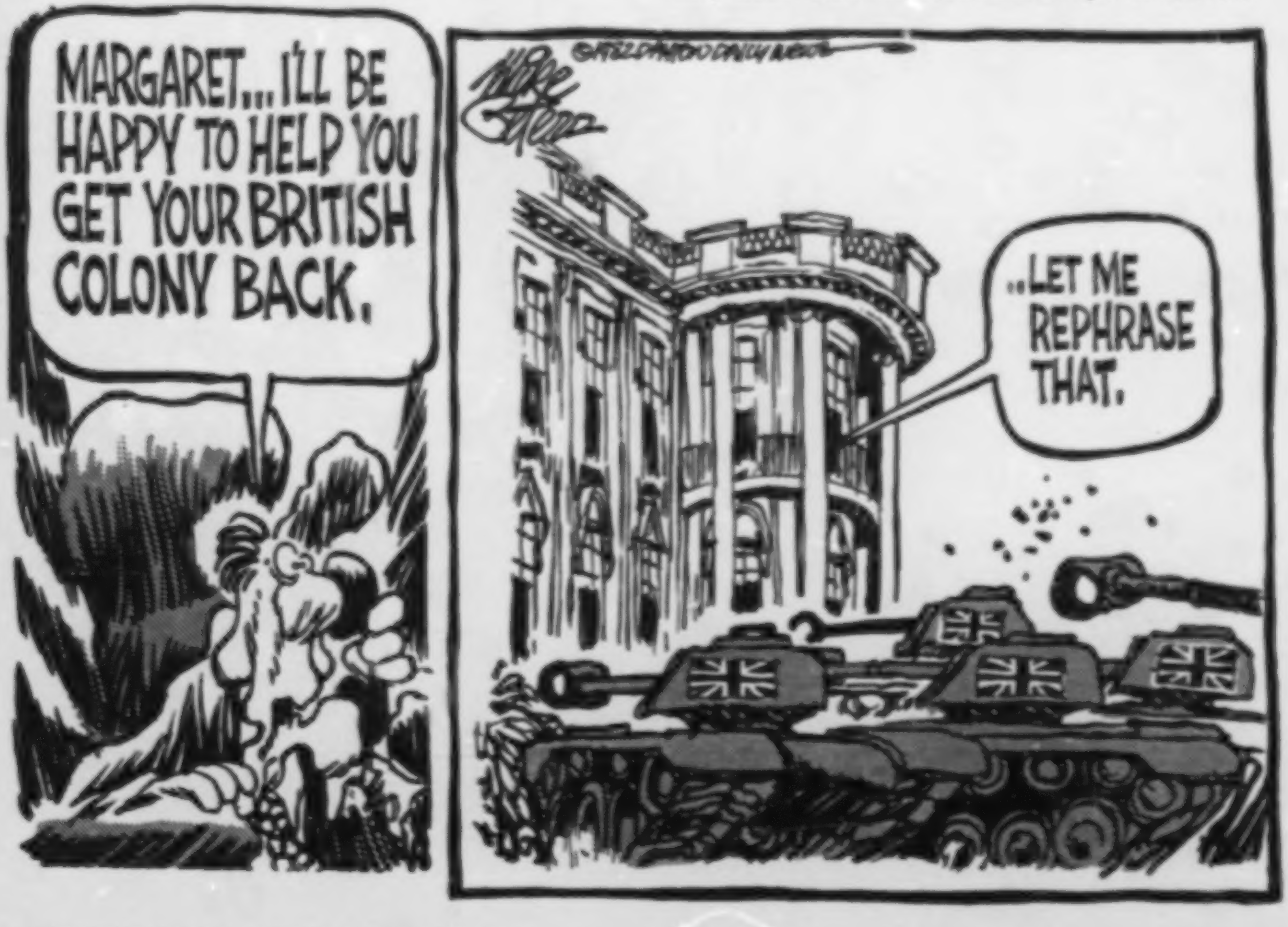

MARGARET... I'LL BE HAPPY TO HELP YOU GET YOUR BRITISH COLONY BACK.
..LET ME REPHRASE THAT.
Mike Peters
©1983 DAYTON DAILY NEWS

Table 2
BRITISH PUBLIC'S APPRAISAL OF ELECTION OF NIXON, CARTER, AND REAGAN

Question: As you may know, Richard Nixon (Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan) has been elected president of the United States. Do you think this will be a good thing or a bad thing for . . .

	Good thing	Bad thing	Don't know	Rating
		America?		
Nixon	60%	7%	33%	+53
Carter	42	19	39	+23
Reagan	30	40	31	−10
		America's standing in the world?		
Nixon	57	7	36	+50
Carter	40	18	42	+22
Reagan	32	35	34	− 3
		Peace in the world?		
Nixon	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Carter	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Reagan	26	37	37	−11
		America's relations with Britain?		
Nixon	59	4	37	+55
Carter	44	16	39	+28
Reagan	46	22	32	+24

Note: n.a. = question not asked. The set of three questions (four in 1980) were asked in November 1972, November 1976, and November 1980. Sample sizes are 930 to 1,100.

Source: Surveys by Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd.

Table 3
BRITISH PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE IN THE U.S. AS A WORLD POWER

Question: How much confidence do you have in the ability of the United States to deal wisely with present world problems —very great/considerable, little, or very little?

	Very great/ Considerable	Little	Very little/ None at all	Don't know
1970 (2)	29%	28%	27%	16%
1971 (—)	—	—	—	—
1972 (2)	30	25	32	14
Nixon, 1970-1972 (4)	29	26	30	15
1973 (4)	29	26	33	13
1974 (5)	33	25	32	11
Nixon, 1973-1974 (9)	31	25	32	12
1975 (4)	32	26	30	13
1976 (1)	33	27	28	12
Ford, 1975-1976 (5)	32	26	29	13
1977 (2)	49	22	21	9
1978 (2)	36	23	28	13
1979 (3)	29	25	35	13
1980 (4)	29	25	35	12
Carter, 1977-1980 (11)	34	24	31	12
1981 (3)	30	25	35	11
1982 (4)	27	27	40	6
1983 (4)	24	26	44	7
1984 (4)	22	25	48	6
Reagan, 1981-1984 (15)	26	26	42	7

Note: The number of monthly polls asking the question each year is given in parentheses. The entry for each year is the mean. Respondents volunteering the answer "none at all" were categorized separately but have been added to those saying "very little" in this table. Sample sizes 900 to 1,100.

Source: Surveys by Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd.

ability of the United States to deal wisely with present world problems?" From the start the British view has been negative: between 50 and 60 percent have answered "little," "very little," or "none at all"; barely a third have answered "very great" or "considerable" (see table 3). Throughout the first Nixon administration, the Nixon/Ford presidencies of 1972-1976, and the Carter administration, British attitudes have been stable (except for a surge of confidence in 1977, Carter's first year). During Reagan's presidency, however, British opinion has clearly shifted to an even more negative position: only a quarter (26 percent) have had confidence in the United States as a world power and over two-thirds (68 percent) have had little or none.

This unfavorable change in the general appraisal of the United States is underlined by a shift of mood on more specific aspects of its role. In foreign policy the proportion believing that the United States "is losing her friendship among Western countries" rose from 60 percent in October 1958 to 79 percent in March 1984 (don't knows excluded). Asked about "the role the United States is now playing in the world," disapprovers exceeded approvers by 38 to 30 percent in 1973 but by 55 to 30 percent in 1983-1984. When asked whether "recent events make you more or less inclined to trust the Americans" the proportion answering "less" rose from 36 percent in April 1975 to 60 percent in April-June 1984.

The question left unanswered by these trends is whether Reagan is victim or villain. What came first: anti-Americanism or anti-Reaganism? There is no sure way of disentangling one from the other. The balance of evidence, however, suggests that Reagan's unpopularity is the producer rather than product of the British public's growing anti-Americanism. First, on Reagan's succession British ratings of the president immediately dropped. Even in his final year, dominated by the humiliation of the Iranian takeover of the American embassy, Carter's presidential rating was, on average, positive (+15 percent), whereas in his first year Reagan's rating was negative (−4 percent) (see table 1). Second, confidence in the United States as a world power did not immediately drop under Reagan's administration; it has steadily declined from one year to the next. In other words, declining confidence in the U.S. appears to be an effect, not a cause, of Reagan's unpopularity.

Reagan's comfortable reelection is popularly attributed to his restoration of a sense of national pride and global strength in the hearts of the American people. But what sends shivers of pride up American backs produces quivers of alarm in British stomachs. The British attitude toward Reagan reminds one of the Duke of Wellington's reaction on first surveying his reinforcements in the Peninsular War: "I don't know what effect these men will have upon the enemy, but, by God, they terrify me."

I am grateful to Bob Wybrow of Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd. for making unpublished poll data available to me. I.C.

Smith & Sheatsley

(Continued from page 15)

the same education and income, integrated public transportation, and equal job opportunities all moved from less than 45 percent support in the early forties to well over 70 percent support by 1970 (see table 2). In fact, because approval had reached such a consistently high level by the late sixties, and therefore no longer differentiated the white population into two meaningful subgroups, these questions were discontinued from NORC surveys. Each item closely parallels the school integration question trend.

Table 3 monitors racial change from 1963 to the present. The table maps changes in the five-item Treiman scale on race relations. Donald J. Treiman originally developed this seven-item race scale in the sixties, using the school integration and public transportation items discussed above plus questions on integrating public facilities, interracial dining, neighborhood segregation, laws on interracial marriage, and black activism. With the discontinuation of the items on public transportation and public facilities, we had a five-item scale that ran from a score of zero, for someone who opposed all forms of racial tolerance, to a score of five, for someone who favored racial integration and accommodation. This scale also reinforces the pattern illustrated by the single school integration item. The mean value increased from 2.09 in 1963 to 3.50 by 1984. In sum, the NORC series indicates that a massive and wide-ranging liberalization of racial attitudes has swept America over the last forty years.

Table 3

Question: Do you think (Negroes/blacks) should have the right to use the same parks, restaurants, and hotels as white people?

How strongly would you object if a member of your family wanted to bring a (Negro/black) friend home to dinner?

White people have a right to keep (Negroes/blacks) out of their neighborhoods if they want to, and Negroes/blacks should respect that right. . . . Agree strongly, agree slightly, disagree slightly, disagree strongly?

Do you think there should be laws against marriages between (Negroes/blacks) and whites?

(Negroes/blacks) shouldn't push themselves where they're not wanted. . . . Agree strongly, agree slightly, disagree slightly, disagree strongly.

	Treiman Scale*
1963	2.09
1970	2.49
1972	2.91
1976	3.06
1977	3.07
1980	3.22
1982	3.37
1984	3.50

Note: *Possible scores on the Treiman Scale run from zero, for one who opposes all forms of racial tolerance as posed in the questions, to five, for one who favors all forms of racial tolerance. The values in the tables are means.
White respondents.

When Changes Occurred

While the increase in racial tolerance has followed a

Table 4

Question: See table 1.

	Black/white students should go to the same schools	
	North	South
1942	40%	2%
1956	61	14
1963	73	30
1963	75	34
1970	83	46
1972	91	67
1976	89	67
1977	90	72
1980	92	75
1982	93	79
1984	93	83

Note: White respondents.

NORTH POLE
NORTH POLE MAIL
Wagner 12-7

"Here is a list from Otis Figby. He says that this year he expects affirmative action."

Grin and Bear It by Fred Wagner
© News Group Chicago, Inc.
Courtesy News America Syndicate

nearly linear ascent, there has been some variation by period. Support for integration of schools, neighborhood, and public transportation increased at an average of 1.2 percentage points per year from 1942 to 1956. That average increased to 2.1 percentage points from 1956 to 1963, with the emergence of the civil rights movement and the beginning of bus boycotts, lunch counter sit-ins, and the dismantling of dual school systems. A second period of accelerated advancement occurred around the late sixties and early seventies. (Two other questions, one on school integration with half black enrollments and another about voting for a black for president, showed maximum increases in tolerance from 1969 to 1972 and from 1967 to 1971.) In recent years, growth in racial tolerance has neither stopped nor even slowed. The annual change of .06 points on the Treiman scale for the 1977 to 1984 period is identical to that achieved during the peak of the civil rights movement in the sixties, and it is twice the rate of the early seventies.

Factors Affecting Tolerance

White racial attitudes have not been monolithic. Three major factors determine white attitudes toward blacks: (a) culture, which consists of region, ethnic and religious heritage, and community type; (b) socioeconomic status, which includes education, occupation, and income; and (c) birth cohort. Racial tolerance is highest among whites who are members of recent birth cohorts and who have been raised in liberal cultures, with above average education and social standing. Region has traditionally been the largest divider among whites. In 1942, for example, almost no white southerners (2 percent) endorsed school desegregation, while 40 percent of whites outside the South ("northerners," for short) already endorsed the principle of integrated education. The gap remained virtually unchanged until 1970 to 1972, years that marked a period of rapid growth in racial tolerance (see table 5). Since then, racial differences on school desegregation have continued to narrow slightly as northern attitudes began to hit a ceiling. The Treiman race relations scale shows a similar pattern. In this case, however, the 1970 to 1972 period marked the only time when attitudinal differences between North and South grew significantly closer.

Table 5

Question: See table 3.

	Treiman Scale	
	North	**South**
1963	2.45	1.11
1970	2.88	1.47
1972	3.16	2.17
1976	3.35	2.40
1977	3.35	2.43
1980	3.47	2.66
1982	3.65	2.74
1984	3.70	3.02

Note: White respondents.

Religion shows a similar, though less dramatic, difference. Jews have consistently been most tolerant, Catholics next, and Protestants the least tolerant (see table 6).

Table 6

Question: See table 3.

		Treiman Scale	
By religion:	**Jews**	**Catholics**	**Protestants**
1963	3.61	2.58	1.81
1970	3.79	2.75	2.28
1972	3.67	3.08	2.64
1976	4.04	3.36	2.79
1977	3.94	3.22	2.90
1980	3.75	3.49	3.00
1982	4.08	3.58	3.18
1984	4.15	3.75	3.31

Note: White respondents.

Some of these differences merely reflect the greater concentrations of Protestants in the South, but the same ordering of religions occurs when we look at northerners and southerners separately. (There are too few Jews in the South to study as a distinct group.) Likewise, tolerance is highest in large metropolitan areas and lowest in rural communities. Alterations in classification schemes over the years hinder exact comparisons, but it is clear that rural communities have consistently been the least supportive of racial integration, while large central cities and their suburbs have had the highest levels of approval.

Table 7

Question: See table 3.

			Treiman Scale		
By education:	**Less than high school**	**Some high school**	**High school**	**Some college**	**College graduate**
1963	1.32	1.88	2.32	2.73	3.15
1970	1.69	2.24	2.57	3.06	3.48
1972	1.97	2.56	3.03	3.28	3.88
1976	2.06	2.53	3.14	3.59	4.00
1977	2.06	2.58	3.21	3.56	3.98
1980	2.18	2.68	3.20	3.71	4.10
1982	2.37	2.90	3.36	3.84	4.19
1984	2.38	2.97	3.36	3.96	4.30

Note: White respondents.

As with religion, this distinction prevails in the North as well as in the South. Briefly, racial tolerance has been, and continues to be, lowest in small southern communities among the majority Protestants and highest in large northern metropolitan centers among the minority Catholics and Jews. In effect, these three cultural indicators are tracers of how close one is to remnants of the plantation slave economy.

The second major factor dividing whites is socioeconomic status (SES). Advanced education, greater occupational standing, and higher income are all associated with racial tolerance. Unlike cultural differences, which show at least some decline, SES differences appear to be quite stable. As we see in tables 7 and 8, the education and income differentials remain virtually unchanged from 1963 to 1982. Education appears to have the most consistent independent effect, but high status occupation and high income also lead to racial tolerance. Besides the humanizing impact of a liberal education itself (explicit emphasis on tolerance, equal rights, and cultural relativism) socioeconomic status adds a margin of generosity that inclines people to think about the common good and also raises them above most direct competition with blacks for jobs, housing, and governmental services.

Table 8

Question: See table 3.

Income by thirds:	Treiman Scale **Low**	 **Medium**	 **High**
1963	—	—	—
1970	2.09	2.53	2.88
1972	2.41	2.89	3.32
1976	2.66	3.02	3.46
1977	2.71	3.08	3.54
1980	2.86	3.22	3.54
1982	2.97	3.49	3.82
1984	3.12	3.50	3.87

Note: White respondents.

Table 9

Question: See table 3.

By age:	Treiman Scale **Under 25**	 **25-44**	 **45-64**	 **65+**
1963	2.38	2.32	1.93	1.53
1970	3.28	2.72	2.28	2.06
1972	3.61	3.16	2.69	2.19
1976	3.65	3.40	2.80	2.29
1977	3.69	3.41	2.82	2.27
1980	3.70	3.56	2.93	2.54
1982	3.92	3.74	3.13	2.64
1984	4.07	3.85	3.17	2.64

Note: White respondents.

The final major factor contributing to racial attitudes is birth cohort. Younger age groups have always been more willing to endorse integration than members of older cohorts (see table 9). Since racial attitudes have been growing more tolerant for at least forty years, each succeeding birth cohort has been raised in a culture more liberal on race relations, and thus each cohort starts its adult phase at a more liberal intercept than previous generations. This process is augmented by the fact that each cohort is also better educated than its predecessor, though the cohort effect is independent of, and in addition to, the education effect. Both operate in a similar fashion in the North and South.

Opening the Door

If we consider simultaneously the contribution of time, culture, socioeconomic status, and cohort, we can isolate the period of 1970 to 1972 as one of especially significant social change. From the Treiman scale and other race items we can identify the late sixties and early seventies as a period of rapid increase in pro-integration attitudes, especially among a fairly narrow subgroup—the better educated and younger segments of the urban South. We have a major collective shift among the more progressive segments of the South away from the traditional "stand in the doorway" attitude. This shift is perhaps best symbolized by the new George Wallace, who recaptured the Alabama governor's seat in 1982 after abandoning his "segregation forever" statements of the sixties and even carrying a large share of the black vote. This shift is incomplete, since even among the young and better educated, the South remains less racially tolerant. But the North-South gap is smaller among the young and better educated than it is among other groups.

Where the Line Is Drawn

While the broad, four-decade-long advance of racial tolerance has steadily driven out once popular notions of white superiority and practices of Jim Crowism, it has hardly turned Americans into a colorblind society.

Table 10

Question: See table 3.

Treiman Scale

	North					**South**				
By area size:	**Top 10**	**Other Metro**	**Urban**	**Rural**		**Other Metro**	**Urban**	**Rural**		
1970	3.04	2.94	2.86	2.51		1.52	1.38	1.31		
1972	3.42	3.14	2.98	2.75		2.54	2.60	1.48		
By age:	**Under 25**	**25-44**	**45-64**	**65+**		**Under 25**	**25-44**	**45-64**	**65+**	
1970	3.75	3.11	2.66	2.91		2.17	1.53	1.36	1.15	
1972	3.78	3.39	2.42	2.55		3.08	2.37	2.09	1.38	
By education:	**Grade school**	**Some high school**	**High school**	**Some college**	**College graduate**	**Grade school**	**Some high school**	**High school**	**Some college**	**College graduate**
1970	2.09	2.74	2.85	3.36	3.77	1.03	1.17	1.75	1.95	2.33
1972	2.33	2.85	3.15	3.48	4.08	1.30	1.76	2.51	2.80	3.03

Whites have steadily abandoned beliefs in the desirability of segregation and the notion that blacks are and should be second-class citizens, but they have balked at taking drastic measures to implement full racial integration. Some see this as negating the advances in tolerant attitudes, or even as exposing those attitudes as tokenism.

School integration illustrates some of the contradictions. By 1982-1984, 89 percent of whites opposed separate schools for whites and blacks, but in 1983 only 23 percent of whites favored racial busing (see table 11).

Table 11

Question: See table 3.

	Treiman Scale
	Percent completely opposed to busing (7 on 7-point scale)
1972 (SRC)	75%
1974 (SRC)	70
1976 (SRC)	69
1980 (SRC)	61
	Percent favoring busing
1970 (Gallup)	14%
1971 (Gallup)	18
1971 (Gallup)	17
1972 (GSS)	20
1974 (GSS)	20
1975 (GSS)	17
1976 (GSS)	16
1977 (GSS)	16
1978 (GSS)	20
1982 (GSS)	19
1983 (GSS)	23

Note: Black and white respondents.

Similarly, in 1983 only 6 percent of whites objected to sending a child of theirs to a school with a few blacks, but 26 percent objected to their child attending a school that was half black, and 62 percent rejected the idea for a school that was mostly black. Whites are willing to accept school integration in principle and in practice when it does not put their children in the minority, but they strongly oppose busing. Yet it is noteworthy that, even in this area, white opposition to busing has slightly diminished over the last decade and a half.

Table 12

Question: Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every possible effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks and other minority groups even if it means giving them preferential treatment. Suppose these people are at one end of the scale at point number 1. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help minorities because they should help themselves. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

	Government help blacks 1	2	3	4	No special treatment 5
1980	—	—	—	—	—
1984	6.5%	8.6%	30.5%	19.5%	34.9%

	Government help minorities 1	2	3	4	5	6	Minorities help themselves 7
1980	3.0%	4.3%	10.5%	24.7%	18.6%	16.2%	22.8%
1984	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Note: White respondents.

Whites are firmly opposed to favoring whites in educational and occupational opportunities but draw the line at compensating blacks for past discrimination and disadvantaged backgrounds by applying racial quotas or other preferential treatment. Majorities opposed special assistance to minorities in 1980: 23 percent placed themselves at the extreme "no help" position, on a seven-point scale, while only 3 percent were at the extreme "help" position. On a related 1984 question about blacks, the "anti-special treatment" extreme (five-point scale) tops the extreme "pro-special treatment" position by 35 percent to 7 percent. Yet, it is not the notion of helping blacks that whites appear to reject, but the anti-egalitarian principle of special treatment itself—the idea of reversed discrimination. Over 32 percent of whites favor more government spending to improve the condition of blacks as opposed to only 19 percent who want less spending. These 1984 figures represent the highest level of support since the series of spending questions began in 1973. Compared to other spending preferences, support for helping blacks falls in the middle—near support for mass transportation, parks and recreation, and assistance to cities. There is more support for an increase in spending for blacks than for space exploration, foreign aid, welfare or defense. Yet the demand falls below that for increased assistance to the poor, solving the problems of big cities, crime, drugs, health, social security, the environment, and education.

Whites are willing to take certain steps to further racial tolerance and equality, such as government spending to improve the conditions of blacks, without going so far as endorsing ideas like preferential treatment and quotas. Whites frequently object to various strong types of implementation, but these rejections do not appear to amount to the actual negation of racial egalitarianism.

In the forty years since Myrdal's *An American Dilemma* appeared, the very nature of the racial dilemma he referred to has changed. He wrote of the often sharp contrast between the lofty moral and political principles of the American Creed and the suspension of that Creed when race relations were concerned. Today, whites are increasingly willing to apply the principles of the American Creed—democracy, equal protection, and liberty and justice for all—to blacks. The dilemma today is whether what most whites still consider to be extreme measures—busing, preferential treatment, racial quotas—are needed to achieve full, functional equality for blacks, or whether such measures are counterproductive and may even violate the principles of equality they seek to achieve.

R-2110-1 #

$5.00

Public Opinion

Published by
American
Enterprise
Institute

Dec/Jan 1985

0009DP0
ACQUISITIONS EDITOR
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INDEX
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE
4520 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY
WASHINGTON DC 20014

Is it RReally RRealignment?

with Peter Hart, Everett Ladd, Norman Ornstein,
Austin Ranney, William Schneider and Richard Wirthlin

Plus—The Media in Campaign '84
and Anthony King on British and American Scandals

Public
opinion

Volume 7, Number 6 December/January 1985

Publisher
William J. Baroody, Jr.

Co-Editors
Seymour Martin Lipset
Ben J. Wattenberg

Senior Editor
Everett Carll Ladd

Managing Editor
Karlyn H. Keene

Deputy Managing Editor
Victoria A. Sackett

Assistant Editor
Graham Hueber

Editorial Board
David R. Gergen, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick,
Irving Kristol, Howard Penniman,
Austin Ranney, Richard M. Scammon,
Laurence H. Silberman, Herbert Stein,
and Richard J. Whalen

Editorial Associate
Marilyn M. Potter

Assistants
John Benson
Lois Timms

Art & Design Director
Pat Taylor

Chart Illustrator
Hördur Karlsson

Staff Editor
Elizabeth D. Ashooh

PUBLIC OPINION, December/January 1985, Vol. 7, No. 6. Published bimonthly by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. Copyright 1985 American Enterprise Institute. Subscription rates: [illegible] for one year, [illegible] for two years. Individual copy: [illegible]. Information on bulk orders of multiple subscriptions available on request. Editorial and business offices: c/o AEI, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Send changes of address and all subscription correspondence to Circulation Department, c/o AEI, same address. "American Enterprise Institute" and are registered service marks of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

ISSN 0149-9157

CONTENTS

2 AS THE REALIGNMENT TURNS: A DRAMA IN MANY ACTS
by Everett Carll Ladd
Was 1984's election another act—or just a change of scene? The author speculates about the play's denouement.

8 MOVING RIGHT ALONG? CAMPAIGN '84's LESSONS FOR 1988
An interview with Peter Hart and Richard Wirthlin
The Pollsters-General of the presidential campaigns compare notes.

12 CHANGING CONGRESS'S COURSE: REPUBLICANS STILL IN THE WINGS
by Norman Ornstein
Will the Republicans have any better luck in 1986 than they did in 1984 or 1982? This congressional expert says it's unlikely.

15 REFERENDUMS AND INITIATIVES 1984
by Austin Ranney
These most direct of our democratic tools yielded some surprises.

18 THE JEWISH VOTE IN 1984: ELEMENTS IN A CONTROVERSY
by William Schneider
The Jewish vote went for Mondale, but in what proportions?

20 TRANSATLANTIC TRANSGRESSIONS: A COMPARISON OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN SCANDALS
by Anthony King
The author creates a new academic discipline- -scandology—and looks at British and American case studies.

23 OPINION ROUNDUP
Nearly everything you ever wanted to know about Campaign '84 using the major exit polls and more.

THE MEDIA IN CAMPAIGN '84

43 CONVENTION COVERAGE
by William C. Adams
Did the networks miss the big story at the conventions?

49 GENERAL ELECTION COVERAGE: PART I
by Maura Clancey and Michael J. Robinson
Assessing network news coverage.

55 THE ADS
by Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates
How Madison Avenue fought the campaign.

by Everett Carll Ladd

As the Realignment Turns: A Drama in Many Acts

After almost every presidential election, politicians and pundits try to discern what voters *really* intended to say. Of course, the most important thing about an election is its actual outcome. But next comes the competing efforts to interpret the outcome in a way favorable to one side or the other. This is neither surprising nor disturbing. Various groups and interests have stakes in the long-term course of American public policy; naturally, they choose to relate election outcomes to what they want that course to be. This continuing policy struggle gets expressed around the idea of a "mandate." Who got a mandate from the voters, to do what?

Four years ago, I discussed the Reagan-Carter election against the backdrop of the argument over what kind of a mandate the new president had won.[1] Rejecting both the view that Mr. Reagan's victory was the culmination of a coherent swing to the right, and that it was nothing more than the spurning of unpopular incumbent Jimmy Carter, I maintained that Reagan had received a positive mandate to take the country in a new direction—but that the mandate was brittle.

Its lack of firmness had three related sources: (1) A more highly educated electorate, in the personality-emphasizing world of TV-centered electioneering, is increasingly cut loose from stable and enduring party ties and is carried instead by the currents of the day. Sharp shifts of direction occur easily in this environment of electoral dealignment. (2) Large proportions of the electorate display so much ambivalence on major policy questions, most notably on the proper role and scope of government, that they commit themselves incompletely to either party's positions. (3) Finally, the quadrennial referendum on the president's performance is so affected by swings in the economy and elsewhere in national life, and is subject to such a high and diverse set of public expectations, that it can never be narrowly ideological. A president's mandate is to do things that are "good for the country." The referendum will go for him and his party when he is seen meeting this demanding performance test—and against him when he is not. Voters wanted the Reagan administration to reduce inflation, increase economic growth, and strengthen the U.S. position in foreign affairs. On this they were firm enough. But a mandate so tied to broad and general standards, awarded by voters so little bound by party loyalties, is inherently unstable.

Most of the specific points of my 1980 argument seem still to apply. But the political context is very different now. Ronald Reagan's 1984 mandate is still brittle for the same reasons it was in 1980—the performance-oriented, what-have-you-done-for-us-lately mood of an electorate that no longer considers voting for "my party" a sociological or psychological imperative. But the context in which I wrote four years ago extended well beyond the confluence of factors that were (and still are) weakening voters' ties to the political parties. Most important, the setting for the brittle mandate was a cycle, some fifteen years old, in which *presidential failure* was establishing itself as the norm. I did not insist that failure would continue, but I did not seriously entertain any other outcome.

There was another possibility, however, to which I had referred in an article published in these pages two months before the 1980 balloting:

> If change is to occur, it will come in response to the actual performance of political leaders in the years ahead. What if a candidate won the presidency and then proceeded to achieve these things:
>
> - to advance a series of programs that are objectively, more effective responses to our national needs than those of the past;
> - to secure a set of modest but coherent changes in the way political institutions operate so that they become more responsive and responsible; and,
> - to convince a clear majority of his fellow citizens that what he has done is sound.
>
> Were this to happen, it is likely that the realignment that [Richard] Scammon and [Ben] Wattenberg think they see aglimmering and that countless observers over the past three decades have thought they detected, would actually take place.[2]

I. The Reagan Referendum of 1984

Inevitably, a president's bid for reelection becomes a referendum on him and his administration. Voters must pass judgment on whether the leadership and approach of the preceding four years deserve to be continued. To be sure, presidents try to turn things around at least somewhat and make the election a vote on the deficiencies of their opponents—especially when things are not going well and they know many people are dissatisfied. Jimmy Carter tried this in 1980, but in the end his attempt failed.

The 1984 presidential election was a referendum, too, but one with very different implications from those of 1980 because it went *for*, rather than *against* the incumbent. Reagan won it at three different levels.

The Personal Dimension of Leadership: The first thing Reagan had going for him was that a substantial majority of Americans had come to like him personally and to consider him an effective leader. Throughout Campaign '84, the polls showed Mr. Reagan getting high marks on the personal dimensions of his leadership—high absolutely, and high in comparison to the grades given his Democratic opponent, Walter Mondale.

Valence Issues: The second factor in Reagan's favor was the influence of "valence issues"—assessments of how things were going for the country. There is no partisan dispute over the desirability of peace internationally and economic prosperity domestically. Sometimes these conditions are achieved, however, while on other occasions they are not. The traditional, commonsense assumption is that incumbent presidents seeking reelection are rewarded when valence issues, the nature of the times, are seen as broadly favorable. But no incumbent since 1964 had benefited from a favorable mix of valence issues—until Reagan did in 1984. We had almost forgotten what it was like. Ronald Reagan called it "the new patriotism"; whatever name one gives it, it included a lot more than how the economy was doing.

The New Political Economy: In Ronald Reagan the Republicans had a highly popular incumbent president, seeking reelection at a time when the economy was doing well and a clear majority felt reasonably satisfied with overall national performance. This is enough to explain why Reagan decisively defeated Walter Mondale on November 6, 1984. It isn't enough, though, to explain the deep concern many Democrats have expressed about the long-term position of their party. "Democrats are in the same position as the French aristocracy at the time of the Bourbon Restoration," William Schneider wrote in December 1984. "We can pretend that nothing has really happened, but the *ancien regime* is dead. Things will never be the same. The problem for the Democrats is to avoid the fate of the Bourbons, of whom Talleyrand said, 'They learned nothing and they forgot nothing.' "[3]

David Vogel has argued that a resolute pragmatism distinguishes the American thinking on questions of political economy. "The American public has supported whichever 'side' has offered the most effective program for promoting real economic growth." From the 1870s through the 1920s, the ascendancy of private business and its success in limiting governmental intervention ultimately rested on business's capacity "to manage successfully the transformation of America from an agrarian to a modern industrial society." The Great Depression changed that:

> Americans supported the reforms of the New Deal because they represented an effective alternative for restoring the viability of the American private sector. . . . What gave political credibility to liberal forces in America during the quarter-century following the Second World War was their ability to argue effectively that the expansion of the welfare state and the adoption of the principles of Keynesian economics were not only compatible with economic prosperity, but essential to it.[4]

Party of Prosperity: In the 1970s, another shift occurred. The Democrats' approach was no longer associated with growing prosperity, and Americans became receptive to "something new." The public had not endorsed any specific set of policy changes. Certainly it had not endorsed the contemporary conservative judgment that "government is the problem, not the solution." It still wanted the state to do a great deal. But it had turned against the contemporary liberal judgment that "the growth of government is the solution, not the problem." Government needed to be reined in, and government-caused problems like inflation brought under control. When to this larger shift of policy expectations was added general satisfaction with economic performance, the Republican position was enhanced. Polls showed more people thought Reagan and the Republicans could cope successfully with many economic problems than believed Mondale and the Democrats could.

The View from Mondale's Camp: During the 1984 campaign, some politicians and analysts argued that Reagan's lead resulted largely because people liked him and because he was such a good television performer. It was a triumph of personality over policy. Peter Hart, who did polling for Mondale throughout the campaign, emphatically rejects this view, calling it "dead wrong and backward thinking." Hart's interpretation is similar to the one presented above—emphasizing that the Reagan presidency was seen to be politically successful in a number of different regards. (See Interview, page 8 of this issue.)

Results: A Firm, Early Decision

The high degree of volatility in the electorate's expressed presidential preferences throughout the 1980 campaign accrued in part from the weakness of partisan attachments. It also resulted, though, from a situation where large majorities viewed the incumbent as an ineffective leader, were dissatisfied with the direction of public policy, and with national performance—but at the same time were uncertain that the available alternative would do any better. There simply wasn't a settled judgment until the end of the campaign. In 1984, however, very different conditions applied. Party ties were still weak, but, as we have seen, the referendum on the incumbent president went decisively his way.

As a result, the electorate was anything but volatile; its commitments were strikingly constant throughout the long campaign. In the October/November issue of *Public Opinion*, we showed the findings of the major organizations that posed Reagan-Mondale trial heats from February 1984 on to just before the election. Though these polls at times disagreed with one another, perhaps because of differences in sampling and other survey methods, the most striking conclusion is how much they generally agreed. More importantly, we see from these repeated polling efforts how very stable the electorate was throughout the campaign.

In 1980, large numbers of voters remained undecided how to vote right to the end of the contest—producing an unprecedentedly large proportion of last-minute deciders. The decision to reelect Reagan, however, was made early. The *Los Angeles Times* exit poll confirmed this. An extraordinary 47 percent of those interviewed said they had decided for whom they would vote sometime *before* the first primaries in February, while another 21 percent had decided before September. The earliest deciders broke two-to-one for Reagan.

II. Realignment and Dealignment

For two decades now, political scientists and other commentators have stumbled and sloshed around the conceptual swamp we have created for ourselves called *realignment*. The main reason we have had such difficulty dealing with contemporary partisan realignment is that we have expected it to be like the one acted out in the 1930s—the Great New Deal realignment, presided over by Franklin D. Roosevelt—that brought the Democrats to power as the new majority party. The New Deal realignment came like a flash of lightning. While the Republicans' majority status had been eroded by earlier developments, such as the changing ethnic makeup of the United States following the big immigration of 1900-1924, the GOP was still clearly ascendant when the Depression began. By 1936, however, the GOP had been humbled and tossed aside, a thoroughly beaten and confused minority. The New Deal realignment was as complete and decisive as it was rapid. By 1936 the Democrats were unquestionably the majority party at all levels: They were the presidential majority, they dominated Congress, they held sway in the state houses, and they had a substantial lead over the Republicans in party identification. The New Deal realignment was accompanied by an unambiguous strengthening of Democratic party loyalties across the electorate.

Clearly, nothing like the above has occurred in American electoral politics since the 1930s. If a set of changes in the partisan balance must closely resemble those of the New Deal, we have not had a realignment in recent years. There has been no galvanizing event comparable to the Depression. The Republicans have been dominating presidential elections, but the Democrats have maintained ample majorities in the U.S. House of Representatives, governorships, and state legislatures. Growing numbers of Americans vote independently—splitting their tickets and deciding their votes on the basis of the candidates and issues in individual elections, rather than going down the line for "my party."

There seems no good reason, however, why "realignment" must be reserved for partisan developments like those of the 1930s. Something substantial has happened, and realignment is a good word for it. First, major shifts in voter alignments have been evident in recent years. Second, there is a new majority party in presidential voting, the Republicans. Third, the mix of issues differs greatly from that of the New Deal period. Fourth, dealignment, the weakening of voters' ties to the parties, seems better understood as a distinguishing feature of the present realignment than as an alternative to realignment. The proper question seems not whether a realignment has occurred, but rather where it is being pushed by the experiences of the Reagan era.

New Patterns in Group Voting

If one wants to locate the time and place of the curtain raiser in our modern realignment drama, it would almost certainly have to be the year 1948 in the American South. White southerners had been the strongest link in the New Deal coalition, and indeed were the most loyal supporters of the Democratic party since the Civil War. In 1948, however, they began their long march away from the Democrats. The States' Rights party, led by Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, seized on white racial protest against Truman policies, split off from the national Democratic party, and carried four southern states. Democrat Harry Truman won the support of just 53 percent of white southerners. In subsequent elections over the 1950s and 1960s, regional opposition to the national Democrats' civil rights policies combined with the increasing attraction that a rapidly industrializing and newly prosperous South felt for the Republicans to produce a massive presidential swing to the GOP. Jimmy Carter, the first true southerner to be nominated for president by a major party since the Civil War, and clearly the beneficiary of substantial regional loyalties, was nonetheless unable in 1976 to win a majority of the vote among southern whites, and in 1980 he got only about one-third of this vote. Whereas 85 percent of white southerners voted for FDR in 1936, just over a quarter of them backed Walter Mondale in 1984 (see Opinion Roundup, page 34).[5]

Over the last three decades a number of other groups that had been mainstays of the New Deal coalition have swung gradually to the Republicans. Labor leaders went all out for Mondale, but the blue-collar vote went for Reagan and the union vote (that is, voters from households where at least one adult was a union member) gave Mondale only a modest margin. Catholics have swung from their historic attachment to the Democratic party, and a majority of them voted for Reagan this year. These and other important shifts were influenced by Ronald Reagan's personal popularity, but they antedated the Reagan presidency by many years and reflected deep-rooted social changes.

The group alignments evident in the 1984 presidential voting represent an extraordinary shift from those of the New Deal era. Even in cases where a group comes down on the same partisan side now that it did then, its position in the larger electoral scheme is often different. Black Americans, for example, gave a majority of their votes to the Democrats during the New Deal, and they do so now, but the Democratic share has grown much bigger since 1964, and blacks are now a much larger component of the Democrats' electorate than ever before.

A Republican Presidential Majority

Another element we have in mind when we speak of partisan realignment is the displacement of the previous majority party and the emergence of a new majority. At the presidential level such a shift has occurred. The GOP has been victorious in four of the last five presidential elections, winning 55 percent of the total two-party vote over this span. Three of the Republican victories have been landslides—in 1972, 1980, and 1984. The one election the Democrats won, in 1976, is in a sense the most graphic confirmation of the GOP's ascendancy: Jimmy Carter and the Democrats managed only the narrowest win in 1976, even though the Republican party had been decimated by the Watergate scandals.

Americans don't elect their presidents by national popular vote majorities, of course, but by electoral votes, all of which go to the popular vote victor in each state. In 1984, Reagan showed the extraordinary breadth of his support by winning 49 of the 50 states. Moreover, for the last five contests the electoral vote maps have looked even more decisively Republican than the popular vote distributions. There are 23 "N^{2}FR^2" states: carried by Nixon in 1968 and 1972, Ford in 1976, and Reagan in 1980 and 1984. These states have 202 electoral votes, about three-fourths of the 270 electoral votes needed for a presidential victory. By contrast, there are no "HMC^{2}M" states; only the District of Columbia has given its support to all of the recent Democratic nominees—Humphrey in 1968, McGovern in 1972, Carter in 1976 and 1980, and Mondale in 1984.

Shifts in Party Identification: Throughout the 1984 campaign, politicians and pollsters perused survey data for indications of whether party identification was beginning to shift toward the Republicans, reflecting the GOP's persisting margin in presidential balloting. Party loyalties usually change only after actual voting behavior shifts; at any point they reflect yesterday's, not today's, political agenda. In view of this lag, there is special interest in the partisan attachments of young voters. The young are not wholly cut loose from yesterday, because family socialization continues to shape them; but their partisan ties reflect more of today's commitments than do those of older voters.

Generational Conversion? Does the current political generation differ from its predecessors? Perhaps. In the late 1970s, polls for the first time began showing the Republicans doing their best at the extremes of the age continuum, among those 18-24 and among the very oldest voters, who came of age before the Great Depression. This pattern has become firmer. The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) surveys taken in 1983 and 1984 suggest, for example, that current generational experience is more supportive of the GOP than any other reaching back to the 1930s (table 1). The Democrats do best among the generations that reached maturity in the height of the Roosevelt years, and in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Republicans' best groups are those that came of age politically in the Roaring Twenties and since 1975. The contrast shown by the NORC data between representatives of the Sixties generation and those of the late Seventies is especially striking. The Democrats' edge over the Republicans is 25 points among those 30-33 years of age, compared to just 4 points among those in their early to midtwenties.

Some surveys taken around the time of the 1984 presidential elections indicate that, for the first time since the Depression, the Republicans may have even more support than the Democrats among the young. For example, a poll taken by CBS News and the *New York Times* between September 30 and October 4, 1984, found 53 percent of persons 18-29 years of age either clearly identifying with the GOP or leaning to it, compared to just 37 percent for the Democrats. Similarly, the *Times*/CBS News poll of November 8-14, 1984, showed the GOP with its biggest advantage in the 18-29-year cohort, where it led the Democrats 50 percent to 42 percent when "leaners" were included.

Table 1
MOST AND LEAST DEMOCRATIC AGE GROUPS

	Democrat	Republican	Independent	% Democratic minus % Republican
All ages	39%	25%	36%	+14
Ages 62-65	48	22	30	+26
Ages 30-33	43	18	39	+25
Ages 22-25	31	27	42	+ 4
Ages 78 and older	31	43	26	−12

Source: General Social Surveys, National Opinion Research Center; composite of surveys conducted in 1983 and 1984.

A Stronger Republican Showing: Looking at all age groups in the population and the findings of a number of different surveys, one sees clear Republican gains. The results of a number of questions on party identification, using various wordings and different samples are shown on p. 39. Clearly, the Republicans got a lift out of the decision made by voters to cast their ballots for the incumbent Republican president. How lasting these GOP gains in party identification prove to be will depend on future performance. What we can conclude is that the Republicans have now closed the gap on the Democrats more than at any time in the last five decades. Four Gallup polls taken in September and October, 1984, showed the Republican percentage in party identification only four points below the Democratic percentage—the smallest gap shown by a sustained series of Gallup polls since 1940.

The Political Transformation of the White South: The shift in party preference of certain groups is especially striking. Long after they began voting Republican presidentially, southern whites still gave the Democrats a large margin over the Republicans in party identification. But according to the exit poll taken by the *Los Angeles Times* on election day 1984, 37 percent of the southern white electorate described themselves as Republicans, compared to just 23 percent Democrats. This is a historic first. Never before the 1984 campaign had a plurality of white southerners identified with the party that had once sent the Grand Army of the Republic marching through Georgia. Perhaps more striking is Peter Hart's finding, described on page 62. In Alabama, Hart found a net swing of 41 percentage points in party identification from December 1983 to November 1984, to the Republicans' favor.

These extraordinary shifts in professed partisan ties obviously point to a big change in party fortunes. But what do they say about the present-day meaning of party identification? We have long assumed that party identification reflected deep loyalties—not easily changed. A group might vote for another party in a given presidential election, even in a number of elections, and still not abandon its ancestral party ties. White southerners managed to keep their Democratic identities in 1948, 1968, 1972, and 1980—when political currents were pushing them away from the Democrats and toward the Republicans at the presidential level. Why did they swing so massively to the GOP in professed party ties in 1984? Was there a straw that broke the proverbial camel's vertebrae? The shift was especially striking in the white South, but all across the electorate there was unprecedented movement in partisan identification during Campaign '84. Is party identification ceasing—in this age of dealignment—to suggest any psychological imperative? Is it becoming something more casual than it has ever before been—little more than a reflection of current political preferences?

Dealignment

The present realignment is accompanied, indeed distinguished, by the continued weakening of voter loyalties to political parties in general. I erred four years ago when I argued that the question was whether a realignment *or* a dealignment was occurring. The larger change in voter alignments we are experiencing includes a greater reluctance on the part of many voters to express any underlying party preference, and an increased willingness to leave the candidate of their professed party with little hesitancy. In general party identification is a more casual matter than it ever before has been. Whatever their future assessment of Reagan administration and Republican performance, or of the Democrats, voters are not going to recreate the extent and degree of stability in party ties that they displayed in the New Deal era. It takes less to move this electorate from one party to the other, from one election to the next.

One manifestation of the diminished strength of party ties is a high frequency of split-ticket voting. In this regard, 1984 fitted neatly into the experience of modern U.S. elections. Gallup regularly asks: "For the various political offices, did you vote for all the candidates of one party, that is, a straight ticket, or did you vote for the candidates of different parties?" For the last five presidential elections the proportions saying they voted a *straight ticket* have been a fairly *consistent minority:* 37 percent in 1968, 44 percent in 1972, 41 percent in 1976, 37 percent in 1980, and 43 percent in

1984. The specific consequences of this proclivity for ticket-splitting can be quite dramatic—as in Nebraska where Democratic Senator J. J. Exon edged out Republican challenger Nancy Hoch, even though Reagan overwhelmed Mondale 71 percent to 29 percent in that state's presidential balloting.

The Two-Tier Electoral System

The present realignment also manifests a kind of split personality: As we have noted, the presidency has been dominated by the Republicans in recent elections, but Congress, state legislatures, and other offices have hardly become GOP bastions.

Some observers explain the two-tier electoral system as Americans' liking for separation of powers and checks and balances. If the direction the Republicans propose for national policy is to be encouraged by the election of Republican presidents, isn't some check on it useful in Congress and the state houses? Besides, a great many people are highly ambivalent about the role of government and other central policy issues. What better way to express their mixed feelings than by ordaining divided party control?

Other observers stress the importance of structural factors that influence voting at the various levels. For example, members of Congress now have large staffs and other resources of incumbency that are useful in advancing their reelection. Gaining high levels of name recognition and emphasizing their nonpartisan service to constituents, they can often divorce their own electoral fortunes from those of their parties' presidential nominees. In addition, incumbents frequently outspend their challengers by substantial margins. Table 2 suggests the big financial edge that congressional incumbents of both parties enjoyed in the 1984 elections, partly because political action committees (PACs) have such a proclivity for backing incumbents—with whom they deal in pressing their various policy objectives. The Democrats entered the modern period with a big edge in congressional seats, and the advantages of incumbency have been theirs more than the Republicans'.

Table 2

TOTAL CAMPAIGN RECEIPTS IN
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES RACES,
JANUARY 1, 1983 TO OCTOBER 17, 1984

	Total receipts	Receipts from PACs
Democratic incumbents	$ 68,729,000	$31,147,000
Democratic challengers	10,922,000	3,306,000
Democratic open-seat candidates	7,324,000	1,664,000
All Democratic candidates	86,975,000	36,117,000
Republican incumbents	43,402,000	15,941,000
Republican challengers	21,866,000	3,795,000
Republican open-seat candidates	7,508,000	2,165,000
All Republican candidates	72,776,000	21,901,000
All major party candidates	$159,751,000	$58,018,000

Source: Michael J. Malbin and Thomas W. Skladony, "Campaign Finance, 1984: A Preliminary Analysis of House and Senate Campaign Receipts," a paper presented at the American Enterprise Institute Public Policy Week, Washington, D.C., December 3-6, 1984.

Both of these explanations of the two-tier voting system seem to have some validity. A great many people are ambivalent on many big policy issues and express that ambivalence by dividing governmental control—easily done given the American separation of powers. And the resources of incumbency are such that many candidates can insulate themselves from broader swings in public preferences. The precise mix of these two sets of factors isn't known.

We do know that the present realignment with a split personality is proving to be remarkably enduring and strong. Some of the most dramatic testimony to that strength comes from a comparison of congressional voting in 1982 and 1984. In 1982, of course, the country was in a deep recession—a big negative for the Republicans. In 1984, in contrast, the economy was doing very well and a popular incumbent was running for reelection. Nineteen eighty-four was as good a year to be a Republican as 1982 was a bad year. This makes all the more striking the fact that in the 340 House races where Republican and Democratic candidates confronted each other in both elections, the average net swing toward the GOP, from 1982 to 1984, was just 3.7 percentage points. Presidential and congressional voting are two distinct systems.

We encounter little disagreement in general on the changes that have occurred, on the shape of partisan competition in the contemporary electoral era. But what will the next act be like? It was hard in 1980 to envision the context for the 1984 election, and it is no easier now looking to 1988. Since the Republicans control the White House, the greatest likelihood of some significant change in the story line of our long-playing realignment drama is likely to be found in the public's perceptions of GOP performance in serving the country's social and economic well-being. Will the approach of the Reagan administration ultimately be seen as *successful*, not merely *promising?* Or will it crash against deepening economic problems and social conflict? In the last analysis American voters are performance oriented, as they have always been. If there is to be a deeper, broader Republican majority, it will result from the public's finding the GOP a successful governing party. ☑

---

[1] Everett Ladd, "The Brittle Mandate: Electoral Dealignment and the 1980 Presidential Election," *Political Science Quarterly*, Spring 1981, p. 1.

[2] Everett Ladd, "Realignment? No. Dealignment? Yes.", *Public Opinion* magazine, October/November 1980, p. 13.

[3] William Schneider, "Half a Realignment," *The New Republic*, December 3, 1984, p. 19.

[4] David Vogel, "The Inadequacy of Contemporary Opposition to Business," *Daedalus*, 109(3) (Summer 1980): 47-57.

[5] For further discussion of the long term shift in group voting, see Everett Ladd (with Charles Hadley), *Transformations of the American Party System* (New York: Norton; 2nd revised edition, 1978).

Referendums and Initiatives 1984

Austin Ranney

In the November 1984 elections, at least one referendum measure was on the ballot in forty states and the District of Columbia, and over 200 propositions were voted on in all. The majority were constitutional amendments, bond issues, and other matters referred to the voters by the state legislatures, but forty-five were *initiatives*—that is, measures placed on the ballots directly by petitions signed by voters. There would have been even more initiatives if the supreme courts of several states had not struck off some measures as proposals for the unconstitutional exercise of the legislative power. The California and Montana supreme courts, for example, deleted initiatives that called for a federal constitutional convention to consider a balanced budget amendment, holding that Article V of the U.S. Constitution stipulates that only state legislatures can petition Congress to hold such a convention. The Massachusetts Supreme Court, as another example, canceled a measure to change the state legislature's rules of procedure.

Forty-six propositions in nineteen states and the District of Columbia appear to have attracted the most national attention. The mean turnout on these propositions was 49.6 percent of the voting-age population, which was not only below the currently estimated turnout of 52.9 percent in the presidential election, but also below the 52.1 percent turnout for referendums in the 1980 election. The highest turnout this year was the 62.5 percent who voted on the Maine legislature's recommendation of a state equal rights amendment (63.1 percent voted No). The lowest turnout was the 32.9 percent who voted in the District of Columbia on an initiative to guarantee the right of homeless persons to overnight shelter (72.3 percent voted Yes).

The most striking trend in the 1984 referendums was the failure of "tax revolt" measures, that had had such success in 1978, 1980, and 1982. Measures mandating limitations on taxes and expenditures were on the ballots in Arizona, California, Louisiana, Michigan, Nevada, and Oregon, and they all lost. In addition, California rejected a measure to limit increases in welfare payments to no more than 10 percent above the national average. One major reason for this sharp change in direction was that in most states business leaders, who had generally supported the earlier tax revolt measures, opposed them in 1984. Most business leaders evidently believed that further cuts in state expenditures would seriously harm the

---

RL: referred by legislature
I: initiative

Government Political Reform

☒ **Alaska** (RL) Allow legislature to annul executive regulations by resolution

Yes	90,450	48.2%
No	97,449	51.8%
	187,899	Turnout = 54.5%

☑ **Arkansas** (I) Increase terms of governor and other executives to 4 years

Yes	499,083	64.2%
No	277,735	35.8%
	776,818	Turnout = 45.9%

☑ **California** (I) Ballots and other voting materials printed in English only

Yes	6,207,657	70.7%
No	2,573,476	29.3%
	8,781,133	Turnout = 46.1%

☒ **California** (I) Reapportionment transferred from legislature to new nonpartisan commission

Yes	3,875,866	44 7%
No	4,790,147	55.3%
	8,666,013	Turnout = 45.6%

☒ **California** (I) Limit campaign contributions and expenditures, provide public funds matching personal funds

Yes	3,025,179	35.6%
No	5,480,743	64.4%
	8,505,922	Turnout = 44.6%

Public Morality

☒ **Arkansas** (I) Authorize casino gambling in Garland County

Yes	236,625	29.6%
No	561,825	70.4%
	798,450	Turnout = 47.1%

☑ **California** (I) Authorize state-operated lottery, prohibit casinos

Yes	5,248,052	57.9%
No	3,812,402	42.1%
	9,060,454	Turnout = 47.5%

☑ **Colorado** (I) Prohibit use of public funds for abortion

Yes	626,910	50.4%
No	616,551	49.6%
	1,243,461	Turnout = 52.6%

☒ **Colorado** (I) Allow casino gambling in Pueblo County

Yes	406,637	33.2%
No	816,816	66.8%
	1,223,453	Turnout = 51.7%

☑ **Missouri** (RL) Permit a state lottery

Yes	1,369,900	69.9%
No	590,648	30.1%
	1,960,548	Turnout = 53.2%

☑ **Missouri** (I) Permit pari-mutuel betting on horse racing

Yes	1,157,664	60.0%
No	771,437	40.0%
	1,929,101	Turnout = 52.4%

☒ **Washington** (I) Prohibit use of public funds for abortion

Yes	749,548	46.5%
No	861,911	53.5%
	1,611,459	Turnout = 50.3%

services—especially education and infrastructure (roads, sewers, and the like)—that help attract and keep industry. Some also feared that the more voters override legislative control of tax policies, the more likely are those policies to favor individuals at the expense of business. The 1984 results suggest that if business interests continue to feel this way, tax revolts of the sort spawned by Howard Jarvis and Paul Gann have seen their best days.

Another noteworthy trend was the paucity of nuclear freeze measures. They were the big story in 1982, when they appeared on the ballots of nine states and the District of Columbia and won in nine of the ten jurisdictions. (Mean turnout on the freeze issue in 1982 was lower [37.6 percent] than turnout for all referendums [40.2 percent].) In 1984, however, only South Dakota had a nuclear freeze referendum, and it lost.

Legalization of gambling was far more popular than the nuclear freeze: voters in California, Missouri, Oregon, and West Virginia approved state lotteries, but Arkansas and Colorado rejected casino gambling.

Business and labor regulation/deregulation produced mixed results: Alaska voted to deregulate transportation; Arizona rejected a proposal to prohibit strikes by public employees; Montana voted to allow denturists to make and fit dentures, but rejected a proposal to end state regulation of milk prices; and Oregon voted to establish a citizen utility board to represent consumer interests in utility rate regulation matters. Environmentalists and opponents of nuclear power had some successes and some failures: Oregon and South Dakota voted to tighten requirements for approval of sites for nuclear waste disposal, but Missouri rejected a measure to close down a nuclear power plant. Arizona voted down three measures to regulate hospital charges.

"Public morality" measures also yielded mixed results: Colorado approved a measure prohibiting the use of public funds to pay for abortions, but Washington rejected a similar measure. Utah rejected a measure to outlaw the broadcasting of obscene or indecent material on cable television.

More mixed results appeared in the area of civil liberties and civil rights: Maine rejected an equal rights amendment, North Dakota guaranteed the right to keep and bear arms, and Oregon adopted two measures strengthening the death penalty; but Oregon also rejected a proposal to extend prosecutors' powers, and Rhode Island voted down a measure to deny bail to persons charged with offenses involving the use of a dangerous weapon.

Finally, my updated "scoreboard" for the continuing political Superbowl of conservatives versus liberals shows the same close game as in previous years: of the twenty-six measures that I thought could reasonably be coded as ideological confrontations, the score in 1984 was liberals fifteen, conservatives eleven. The 1984 referendums, however, appear to provide further confirmation for the conclusion reached in my report on the 1982 referendums: the failure of either ideology to win clear and consistent victories may be merely an artifact of my coding but is more likely the result of "the fact that most voters are less concerned with whether a particular measure represents a 'liberal' or a 'conservative' position than with whether it is right or wrong."

Austin Ranney
Resident Scholar
American Enterprise Institute

I am grateful to Susan Irvings and Graham Hueber for their assistance in compiling this data.

☑ **Oregon** (I) Establish state lottery

Yes	740,950	66.1%
No	379,995	33.9%
	1,120,945	Turnout = 57.2%

☒ **Utah** (I) Make obscene or indecent material on cable TV unlawful

Yes	238,734	39.0%
No	373,361	61.0%
	612,095	Turnout = 58.9%

Taxes, Revenue, Bonds

☒ **Arizona** (RL) Lower limit on state spending

Yes	356,570	45.3%
No	430,363	54.7%
	786,933	Turnout = 35.8%

☒ **California** (I) Jarvis amendment to plug loopholes in Proposition 13 (1978)

Yes	3,941,286	45.3%
No	4,764,792	54.7%
	8,706,078	Turnout = 45.7%

☒ **Idaho** (I) Exempt food purchased for human consumption from sales tax

Yes	186,505	47.0%
No	210,054	53.0%
	396,559	Turnout = 58.2%

☒ **Louisiana** (RL) Limit appropriations in accordance with growth in personal income

Yes	487,631	39.4%
No	750,295	60.6%
	1,237,926	Turnout = 39.3%

☒ **Michigan** (I) Require voter approval of all new taxes and all changes in taxation which result in revenue increases

Yes	1,376,141	40.3%
No	2,035,867	59.7%
	3,412,008	Turnout = 52.2%

☒ **Nevada** (I) Require new state and local revenue measures to be proposed by a 2/3 vote of governing body and approved by majority of voters, plus limit on property taxes

Yes	132,688	48.0%
No	143,499	52.0%
	276,187	Turnout = 40.1%

☑ **Nevada** (RL) Exempt food for human consumption from sales tax

Yes	225,611	83.3%
No	45,316	16.7%
	270,927	Turnout = 39.3%

☒ **Oregon** (I) Limit real property tax rate; require elections for new taxes

Yes	568,767	49.1%
No	590,553	50.9%
	1,159,320	Turnout = 59.1%

Environment

☑ **Michigan** (RL) Establish natural resources trust fund financed by revenues from resource leases

Yes	2,066,554	64.8%
No	1,120,794	35.2%
	3,187,348	Turnout = 48.8%

☒ **Missouri** (I) Close down Calloway nuclear plant

Yes	650,895	33.1%
No	1,317,444	66.9%
	1,968,339	Turnout = 53.5%

☑ **Oregon** (I) Tighten requirements for approving sites for nuclear waste disposal

Yes	606,629	55.0%
No	495,422	45.0%
	1,102,051	Turnout = 56.2%

☑ **South Dakota** (I) Require voter approval of nuclear waste disposal sites

Yes	180,326	62.0%
No	110,498	38.0%
	290,824	Turnout = 58.4%

☑ **Washington** (I) End Indian fishing privileges

Yes	819,497	52.6%
No	736,855	47.4%
	1,556,352	Turnout = 48.6%

Health, Welfare, and Housing

☒ **Arizona** (RL) Empower legislature to impose rate limits on hospitals

Yes	380,728	42.7%
No	511,013	57.3%
	891,741	Turnout = 40.5%

☒ **Arizona** (I) Establish a commission to regulate hospital pricing

Yes	375,982	40.4%
No	553,676	59.6%
	929,658	Turnout = 42.3%

☒ **Arizona** (RL) Limit increases in hospital pricing from 1986 through 1990

Yes	432,913	49.0%
No	444,651	51.0%
	877,564	Turnout = 39.9%

☒ **California** (I) Limit public funds that can be spent for some, but not all, public assistance programs

Yes	3,155,385	37.0%
No	5,363,984	63.0%
	8,519,369	Turnout = 44.7%

☑ **District of Columbia** (I) Affirm right of homeless to overnight shelter

Yes	114,698	72.3%
No	43,966	27.7%
	158,664	Turnout = 32.9%

Civil Liberties/Civil Rights

☑ **Connecticut** (RL) Prohibit discrimination against a person because of physical or mental disability

Yes	635,754	77.8%
No	180,955	22.2%
	816,709	Turnout = 34.0%

☒ **Maine** (RL) Equal rights amendment

Yes	195,653	36.9%
No	333,998	63.1%
	529,651	Turnout = 62.5%

☑ **North Dakota** (I) Guarantee right to keep and bear arms

Yes	236,596	80.2%
No	58,582	19.8%
	295,178	Turnout = 60.1%

☑ **Oregon** (I) Exempt aggravated murder statutes requiring death penalty from constitutional guarantees against cruel and unusual punishments

Yes	609,536	55.6%
No	487,272	44.4%
	1,096,808	Turnout = 55.9%

☑ **Oregon** (I) Require death penalty by lethal injection or minimum 30-year sentence for aggravated murder

Yes	830,951	74.9%
No	278,565	25.1%
	1,109,516	Turnout = 56.6%

☒ **Oregon** (I) Expand prosecutor's control over trial procedures, make major changes in police powers, evidence, sentencing, parole, and victim's role

Yes	515,420	48.0%
No	559,260	52.0%
	1,074,680	Turnout = 54.8%

☑ **Rhode Island** (RL) Automatic restoration of convicted felon's right to vote on completion of probation or parole

Yes	155,337	54.1%
No	131,648	45.9%
	286,985	Turnout = 39.2%

☒ **Rhode Island** (RL) Allow denial of bail to persons charged with offenses involving use or threat of use of a dangerous weapon

Yes	133,153	47.2%
No	148,892	52.8%
	282,045	Turnout = 38.5%

Business/Labor/Regulation/Deregulation

☑ **Alaska** (I) Deregulate transportation

Yes	115,471	59.8%
No	77,757	40.2%
	193,228	Turnout = 56.0%

☒ **Arizona** (RL) Prohibit strikes by public employees

Yes	397,439	44.2%
No	501,745	55.8%
	899,184	Turnout = 40.9%

☒ **Montana** (I) Abolish state regulation of milk prices

Yes	145,342	39.5%
No	222,199	60.5%
	367,541	Turnout = 62.2%

☑ **Montana** (I) Allow making, fitting, repairing of dentures by denturists

Yes	194,285	53.1%
No	171,446	46.9%
	365,733	Turnout = 61.9%

☑ **Oregon** (I) Establish citizen utility board to represent consumer interests before utilities

Yes	597,479	52.3%
No	544,115	47.7%
	1,141,594	Turnout = 58.2%

Nuclear Freeze

☒ **South Dakota** (I) Call upon the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to establish a verifiable nuclear arms freeze

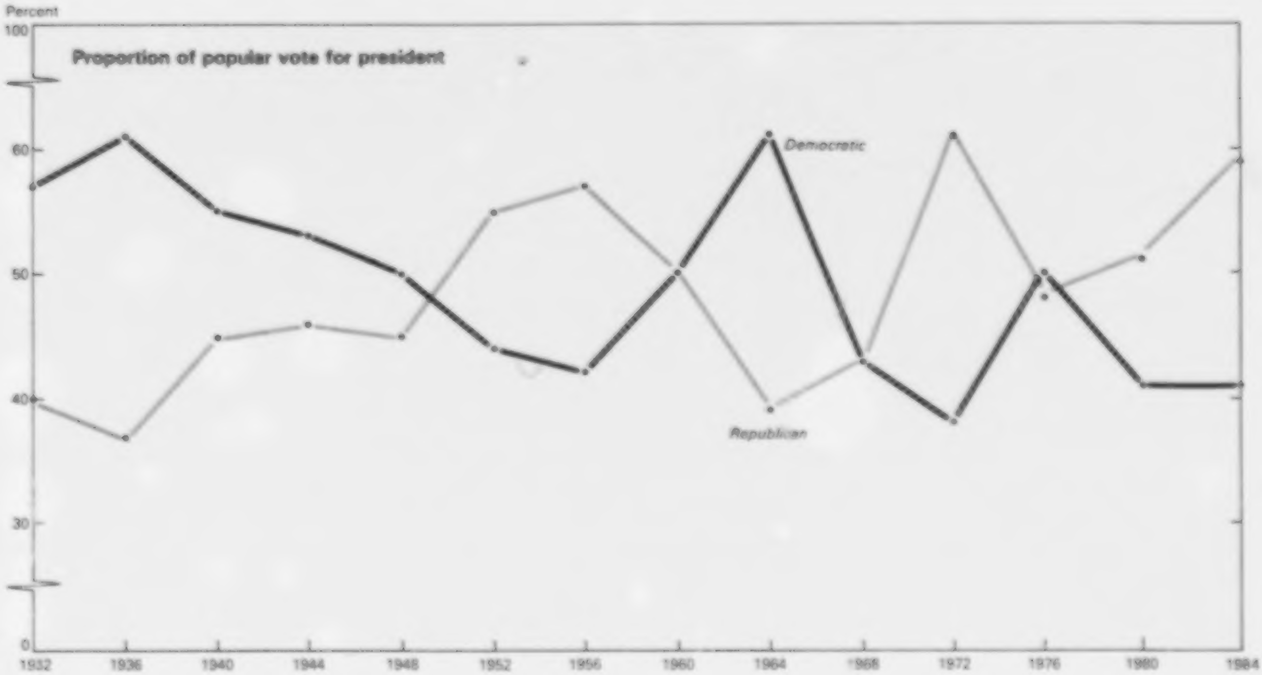
Yes	135,307	47.6%
No	148,705	52.4%
	284,012	Turnout = 57.0%

Totals do not reflect late absentee votes and recounted ballots.

CONSERVATIVE-LIBERAL SCORECARD, 1984

Issue	*Conservative Wins*	*Liberal Wins*
Government/political reform	Calif. (2)	Calif.
Public morality	Colo.	Wash.
Taxes, revenue, bonds	— —	Ariz., Calif., La., Mich., Nev., Ore.
Environment	Mo., Wash.	
Health, Welfare, and Housing	— —	Calif.
Civil liberties/civil rights	Me., N. Dak., Ore. (2)	Ore., R.I. (2)
Business/labor/regulation/deregulation	Ala.	Ariz., Mont., Ore.
Nuclear freeze	S. Dak.	

THE 1984 ELECTION RESULTS



	Democratic	Republican
1932	57%	40%
1936	61	37
1940	55	45
1944	53	46
1948	50	45
1952	44	55
1956	42	57
1960	50	50
1964	61	39
1968	43	43
1972	38	61
1976	50	48
1980	41	51
1984	41	59

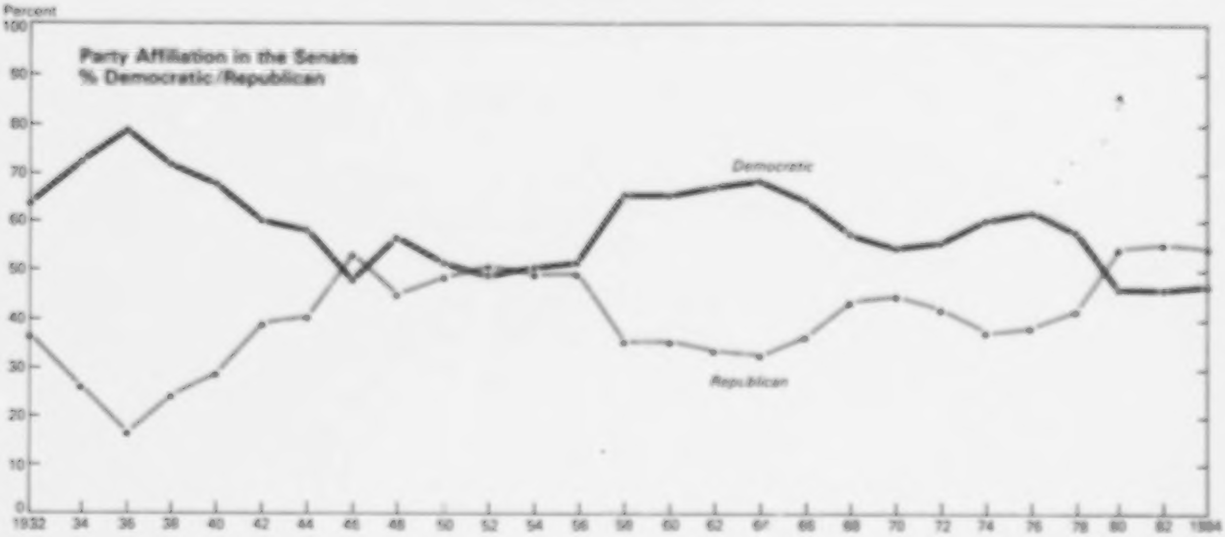
Source: 1932-1980, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1984; 1984, *National Journal*, November 10, 1984, p. 2122.

The "Democratic era" in presidential voting ended over a quarter century ago. As these data on cumulative popular vote for president show, the Democrats had a large majority over the Republicans for the 1932-1948 span, but the GOP has amassed more presidential ballots since 1952.

Total popular vote in presidential elections

	Democratic	Republican
1932-1948	127,688,000	98,791,000
1952-1984	303,856,000	345,511,000

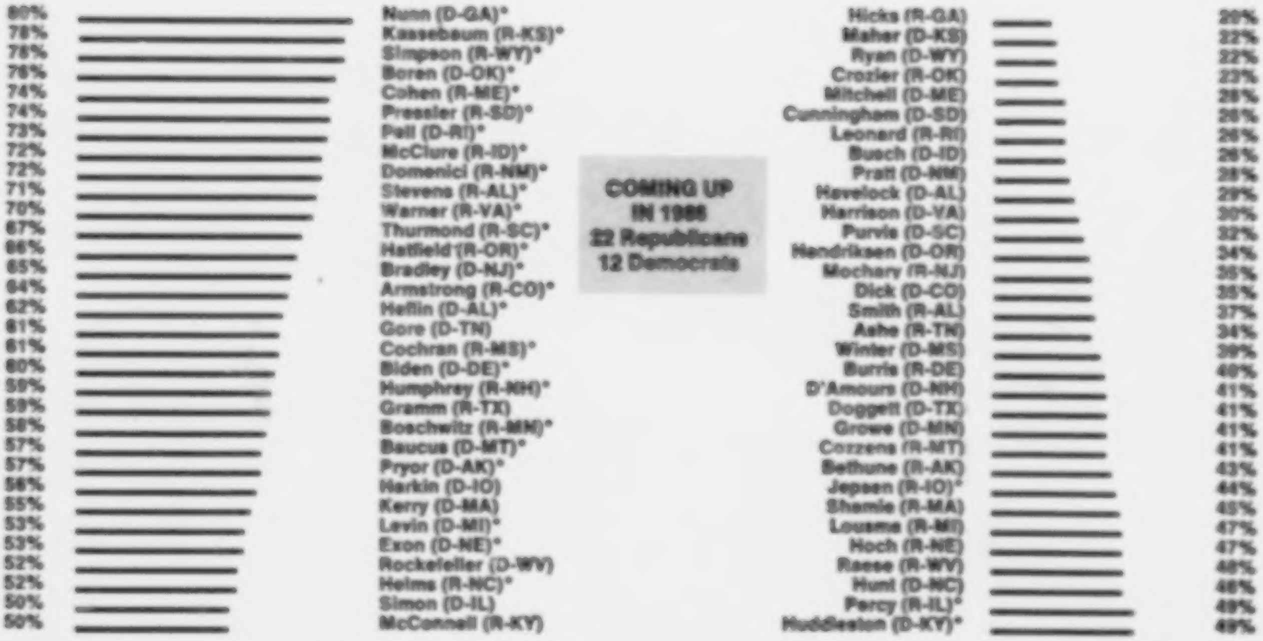
THE SENATE



	1932	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84
Democratic	63%	72%	79%	72%	69%	60%	58%	47%	56%	51%	49%	50%	51%	65%	65%	67%	68%	64%	57%	54%	56%	60%	61%	58%	46%	46%	47%
Republican	36	26	16	24	29	39	40	53	44	49	50	49	49	35	35	33	32	36	43	44	42	37	38	41	53	54	53

Source: For 1932 to 1982, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1984; for 1984, *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Reports*, November 10, 1984, p. 2891.

WINNERS AND LOSERS



WINNERS	
80%	Nunn (D-GA)*
78%	Kassebaum (R-KS)*
78%	Simpson (R-WY)*
76%	Boren (D-OK)*
74%	Cohen (R-ME)*
74%	Pressler (R-SD)*
73%	Pell (D-RI)*
72%	McClure (R-ID)*
72%	Domenici (R-NM)*
71%	Stevens (R-AL)*
70%	Warner (R-VA)*
67%	Thurmond (R-SC)*
66%	Hatfield (R-OR)*
65%	Bradley (D-NJ)*
64%	Armstrong (R-CO)*
62%	Heflin (D-AL)*
61%	Gore (D-TN)
61%	Cochran (R-MS)*
60%	Biden (D-DE)*
59%	Humphrey (R-NH)*
59%	Gramm (R-TX)
58%	Boschwitz (R-MN)*
57%	Baucus (D-MT)*
57%	Pryor (D-AK)*
56%	Harkin (D-IO)
55%	Kerry (D-MA)
53%	Levin (D-MI)*
53%	Exon (D-NE)*
52%	Rockefeller (D-WV)
52%	Helms (R-NC)*
50%	Simon (D-IL)
50%	McConnell (R-KY)

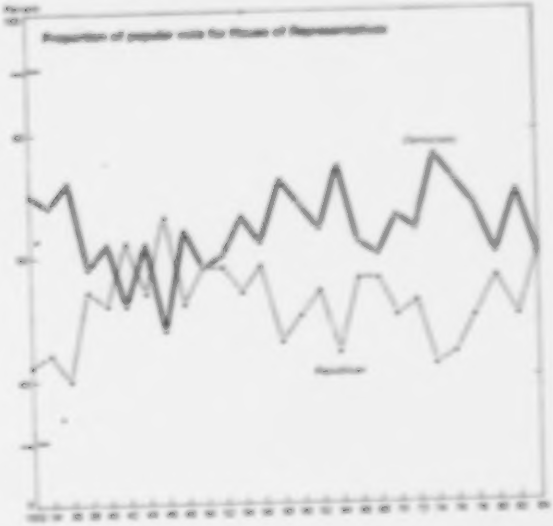
COMING UP IN 1986
22 Republicans
12 Democrats

LOSERS	
Hicks (R-GA)	20%
Maher (D-KS)	22%
Ryan (D-WY)	22%
Crozier (R-OK)	23%
Mitchell (D-ME)	26%
Cunningham (D-SD)	26%
Leonard (R-RI)	26%
Busch (D-ID)	26%
Pratt (D-NM)	28%
Havelock (D-AL)	29%
Harrison (D-VA)	30%
Purvis (D-SC)	32%
Hendriksen (D-OR)	34%
Mochary (R-NJ)	35%
Dick (D-CO)	35%
Smith (R-AL)	37%
Ashe (R-TN)	34%
Winter (D-MS)	39%
Burris (R-DE)	40%
D'Amours (D-NH)	41%
Doggett (D-TX)	41%
Growe (D-MN)	41%
Cozzens (R-MT)	41%
Bethune (R-AK)	43%
Jepsen (R-IO)*	44%
Shamie (R-MA)	45%
Lousma (R-MI)	47%
Hoch (R-NE)	47%
Raese (R-WV)	48%
Hunt (D-NC)	48%
Percy (R-IL)*	49%
Huddleston (D-KY)*	49%

Note: Does not include Louisiana where J. Bennett Johnston, Jr., was elected without challenge. * = incumbent candidate.

Source: *National Journal*, November 10, 1984, p. 2136.

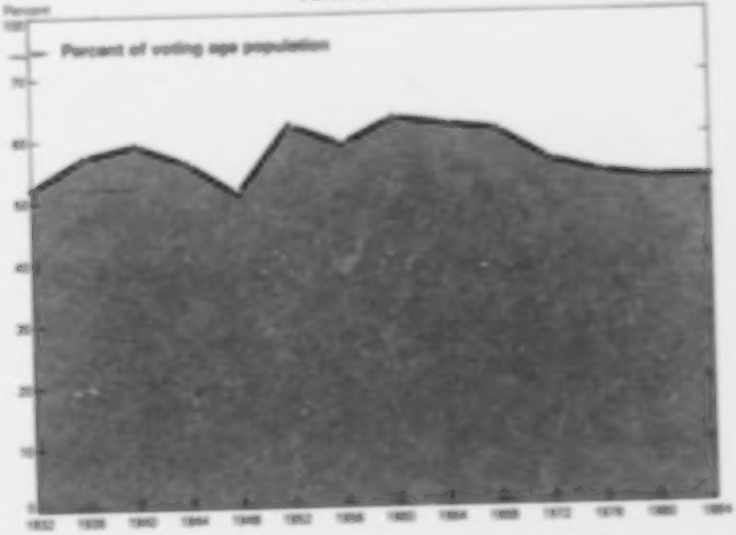
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



	1932	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84
Democratic	55%	54%	56%	49%	51%	46%	51%	44%	52%	49%	50%	53%	51%	51%	54%	52%	57%	51%	50%	53%	52%	58%	56%	54%	50%	55%	50%
Republican	41	42	40	47	46	51	47	53	46	49	49	47	49	43	45	47	42	48	48	45	46	41	42	45	48	45	50

Source: 1932-1970, *Historical Abstract of the U.S.: Colonial Times to 1970: Part 2*, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (1975), p. 1084. 1972-1982, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1984, *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, November 10, 1984, pp. 2923-2930.

TURNOUT



1932	1936	1940	1944	1948	1952	1956	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984
52%	57%	59%	56%	51%	62%	59%	63%	62%	61%	56%	54%	53%	53%

Note: Population is resident population (including aliens) estimated as of November. Population 21 years and older, 1932-1970, except as noted, and 18 years old and older thereafter; includes armed forces. Prior to 1960 excludes Alaska and Hawaii. District of Columbia is included in votes cast for president beginning in 1964. Voting age population 18 and over in Georgia, 1944-1970, and in Kentucky, 1956-1970; 19 and over in Alaska and 20 and over in Hawaii.

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States* 1984, for elections from 1932 to 1980. For 1984, Center for the Study of the American Electorate.

Note: In the December/January 1983 issue of *Public Opinion*, Everett Ladd looked closely at the way we calculate turnout in the United States. In another article (October/November 1983) Austin Ranney questioned some assumptions about nonvoting levels in the United States.

ELECTION BOXSCORE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

	1976 Dem	1976 Rep	1978 Dem	1978 Rep	1980 Dem	1980 Rep	1982 Dem	1982 Rep	1984 Dem	1984 Rep
Total	292	143	276	159	243	192	269	166	252	182
Women	13	5	11	5	10	9	12	9	11	11
Blacks	15	0	15	0	17	0	21	0	20	0

SENATE

	1976 Dem	1976 Rep	1978 Dem	1978 Rep	1980 Dem	1980 Rep	1982 Dem	1982 Rep	1984 Dem	1984 Rep
Tual	62	38	59	41	46	53	46	54	47	53
Women	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	2	0	2
Blacks	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

GOVERNORS

	1976 Dem	1976 Rep	1978 Dem	1978 Rep	1980 Dem	1980 Rep	1982 Dem	1982 Rep	1984 Dem	1984 Rep
Total	37	12	32	18	27	23	34	16	34	16

MEMBERS OF STATE LEGISLATURES[1]

	1976 Dem	1976 Rep	1978 Dem	1978 Rep	1980 Dem	1980 Rep	1982 Dem	1982 Rep	1984 Dem	1984 Rep
Total	5,128	2,370	4,762	2,680	4,483	2,918	4,643	2,734	4,404	3,057
Women	688		774		887		966		1,087	
Blacks	295		307		318		337		384	

PROPORTIONS OF STATE LEGISLATORS[2]

	1976 Dem	1976 Rep	1978 Dem	1978 Rep	1980 Dem	1980 Rep	1982 Dem	1982 Rep	1984 Dem	1984 Rep
	68	31	64	36	60	39	63	37	59	41

CONTROL OF STATE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS BY PARTY

	1976 Dem	1976 Rep	1978 Dem	1978 Rep	1980 Dem	1980 Rep	1982 Dem	1982 Rep	1984 Dem	1984 Rep
National	80	18	68	27	63	35	71	26	65	31
Northeast	13	5	12	6	10	8	12	6	11	7
South	32	0	32	0	31	1	32	0	31	1
North Central	17	5	11	10	10	12	14	7	11	11
West	18	8	13	11	12	14	13	13	12	12

STATES WITH BOTH LEGISLATIVE HOUSES AND GOVERNOR OF THE SAME PARTY

	1976 Dem	1976 Rep	1978 Dem	1978 Rep	1980 Dem	1980 Rep	1982 Dem	1982 Rep	1984 Dem	1984 Rep
	29	1	20	4	17	7	23	4	18	4

Note: [1] Nebraska excluded from legislative house calculation because it is a unicameral, nonpartisan legislative system. The data on state legislatures are the latest available at time of publication. They were provided by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Women's Education Fund/UPI, and the Joint Center for Political Studies.

[2] For 1984, excludes Montana lower house which is split evenly 50 Democrats, 50 Republicans; and New Mexico upper house which is split evenly 21 Democrats, 21 Republicans.

Source: For 1976 and 1978, *Public Opinion*, November/December 1978, p. 25. For 1980 and 1982, *Public Opinion*, December/January 1983, p. 26. For 1984: Members of Congress—*Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, November 10, 1984, pp. 2891, 2901, 2921; Governors—*Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, November 10, 1984, p. 2911; Members of state legislatures—*Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, November 17, 1984, pp. 2944-2945 and *Washington Post*, November 12, 1984; Proportions of state legislatures and control of state legislative chambers by party, *National Journal*, November 10, 1984; States with both legislative houses and governor of the same party—*National Journal*, November 17, 1984, pp. 2944-2945.

DECISION TIME

TIME OF DECISION

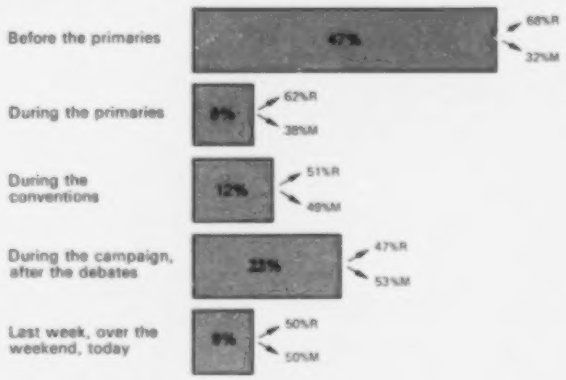
Question: How long before the election did you decide that you were going to vote the way you did?

	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980
Knew all along, always vote same party, pre-conventions	31%	41%	35%	44%	33%	40%
At time of conventions	31	25	24	18	21	18
After conventions	26	21	19	22	22	15
Within two weeks of election, on election day	12	13	21	13	24	25

Note: The response categories' wording varied slightly over the years. 1984 numbers not yet available. "Other" excluded = 2% or less each year.

Source: Surveys by the Center for Political Studies of the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan Election Studies, latest that of 1980.

Question: How long ago did you finally decide for whom you would vote?



Note: 7,310 voters as they left voting booths.

Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1984.

TICKET SPLITTING

Question: Who did you vote for in the election for president? Who did you vote for in the election for the House of Representatives in Washington?

	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980
Democrat for president/ Democrat for Congress	45%	59%	40%	31%	42%	34%
Democrat for president/ Republican for Congress	4	9	7	5	9	8
Republican for president/ Democrat for Congress	10	6	11	25	16	20
Republican for president/ Republican for Congress	41	26	42	40	34	38

Note: Figures are based on contested and uncontested races. 1984 numbers not yet available.

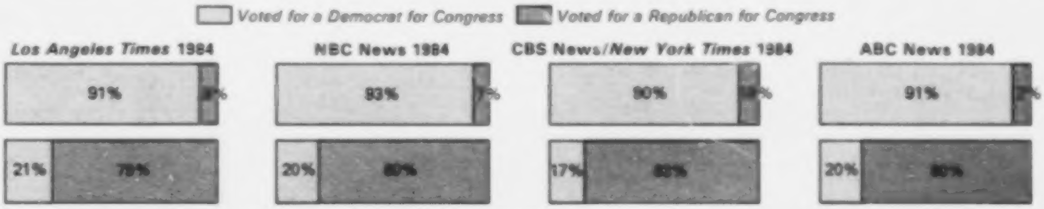
Source: Surveys by the Center for Political Studies of the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan Election Studies, latest that of 1980.

Question: For the various political offices, did you vote for all of the candidates of one party, that is, a straight ticket, or did you vote for candidates of different parties?

	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984
Voted for candidates of different parties	62%	55%	58%	62%	56%
Straight ticket	38	45	42	38	44

Note: Gallup post-election survey of voters.

Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of November 9-12, 1984.

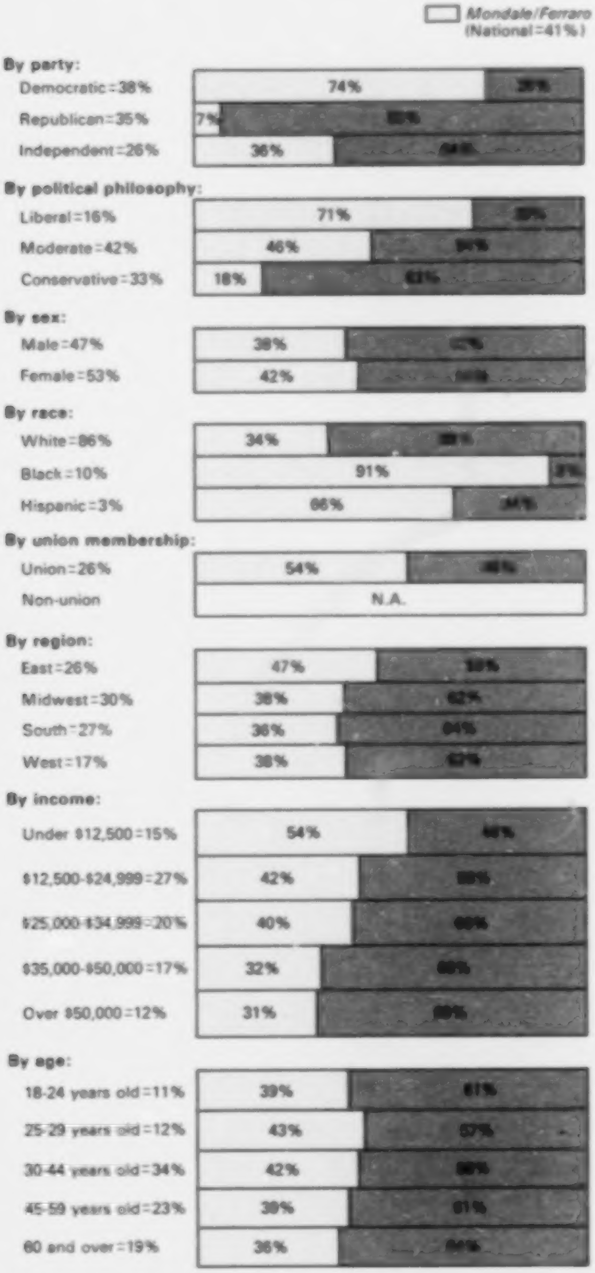


Note: Voters leaving voting booths. Someone else, No opinion and No House vote are calculated out.

THE EXIT

CBS NEWS/*NEW YORK TIMES*
1984

Question: In the presidential election, who did you just vote for?

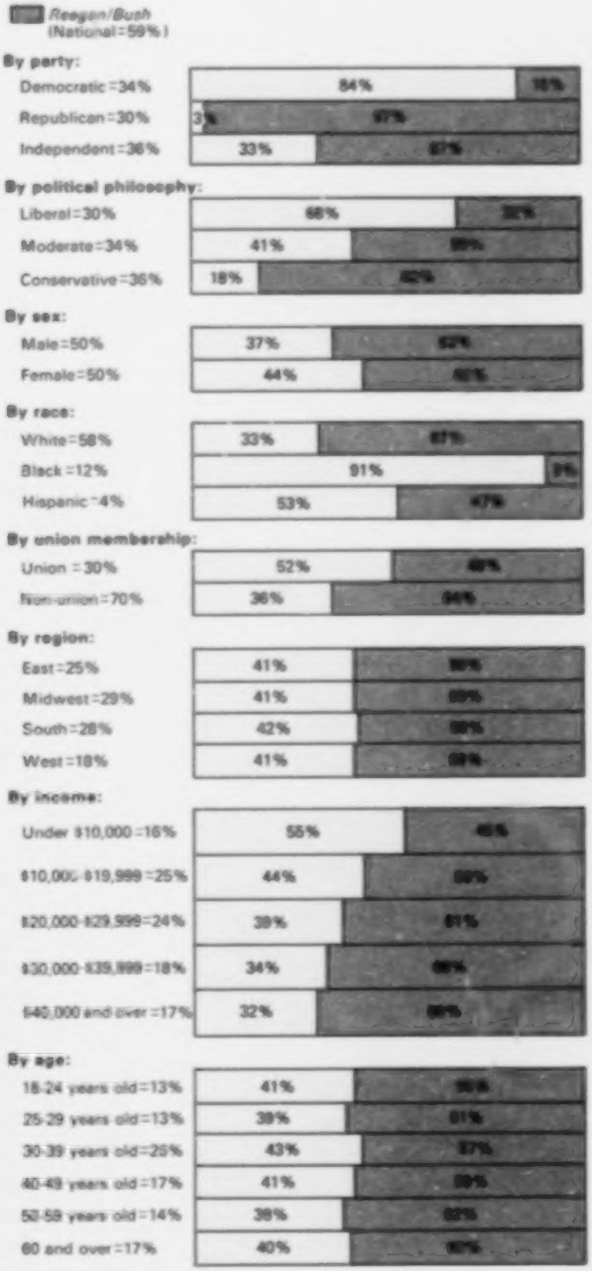


Note: Sample size = 8,671 voters as they left voting booths. The survey was not conducted in the states of Washington, Alaska, or Hawaii. Someone else/No vote for president (both 1% or less) calculated out for comparison purposes.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 6, 1984.

LOS ANGELES TIMES
1984

Question: In the presidential election, whom did you just vote for?



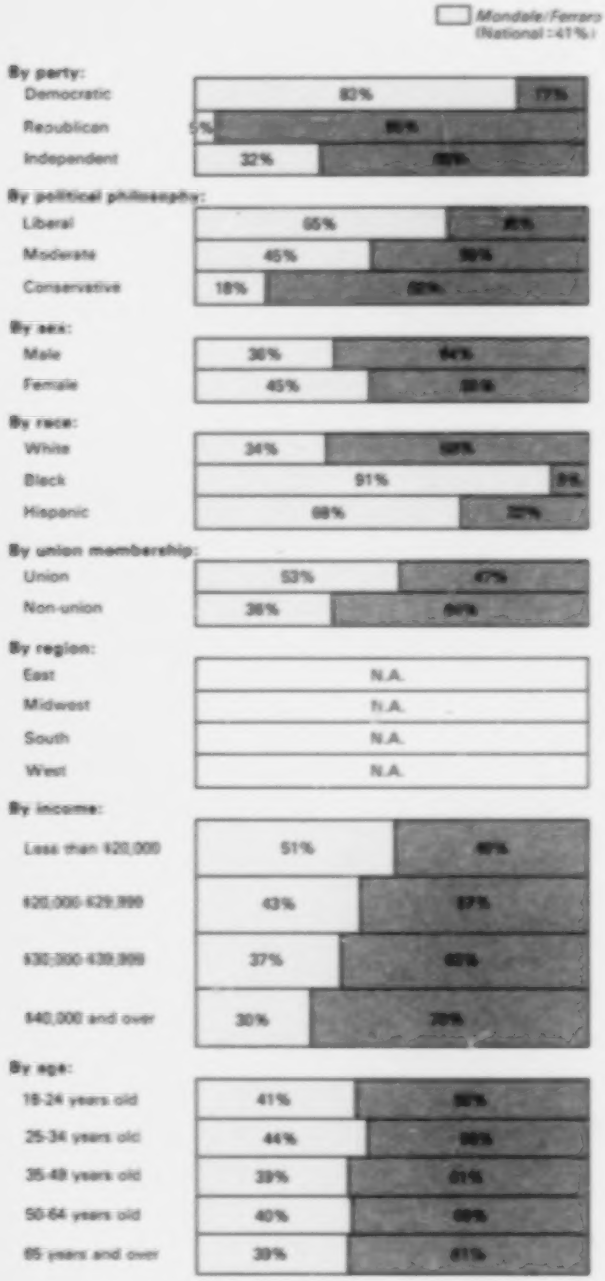
Note: Sample size = 7,310 voters as they left voting booths. Someone else/No vote for president (both 1% or less) calculated out for comparison purposes.

Source: Survey by *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1984.

POLL RESULTS

NBC NEWS
1984

Question: For whom did you just vote in the presidential election?

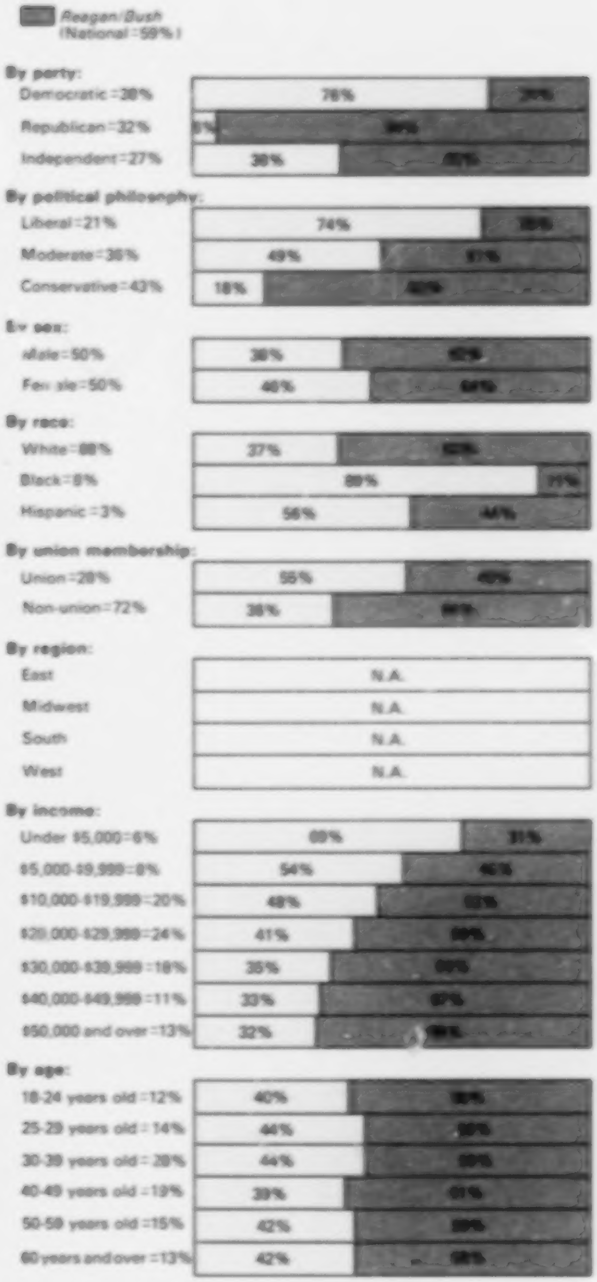


Note: Sample size = 11,671 voters as they left voting booths. Percent of sample of demographic groups was not available.

Source: Survey by NBC News, November 6, 1984.

ABC NEWS
1984

Question: For whom did you vote for president?



Note: Sample size = 11,023 voters as they left voting booths. Someone else/No vote for president (both 1% or less) calculated out for comparison purposes.

Source: Survey by ABC News, November 6, 1984.

IV PATTERNS IN

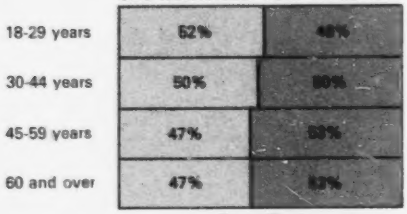
Unless otherwise noted, data on pages 30 thru 35 are exit poll data.

AGE

▭ *Voted for Democratic candidate* ▨ *Republican candidate* ▒ *Independent candidate*

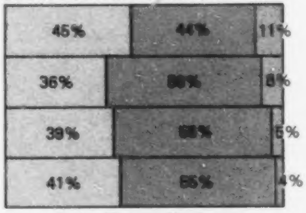
Vote for president/Historical trend

CBS News/*New York Times* 1976



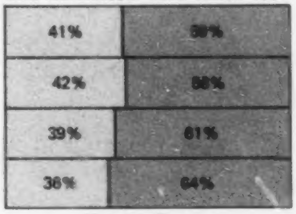
Carter/Ford

CBS News/*New York Times* 1980



Carter/Reagan/Anderson

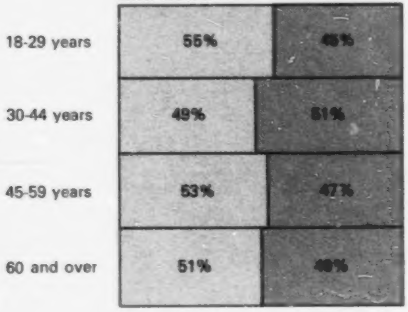
CBS News/*New York Times* 1984



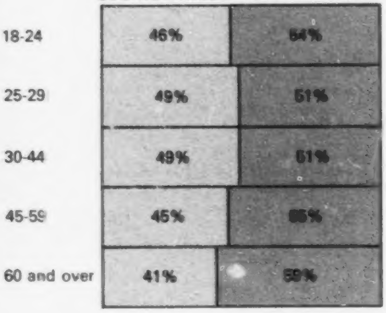
Mondale/Reagan

Vote for House of Representatives

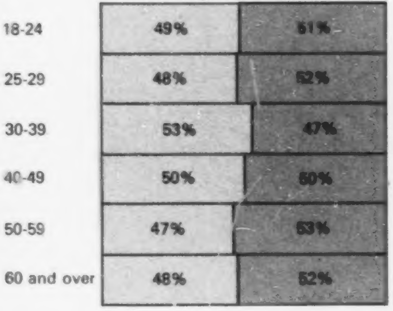
CBS News/*New York Times* 1980



CBS News/*New York Times* 1984



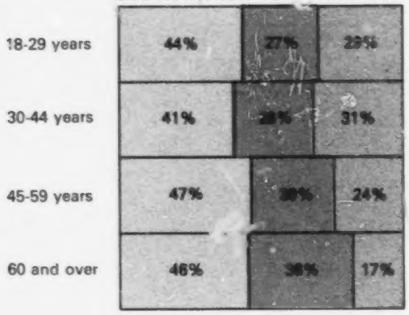
***Los Angeles Times* 1984**



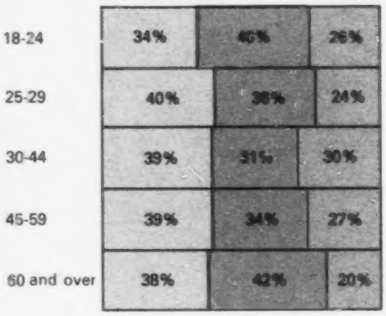
▭ *Democratic* ▨ *Republican* ▒ *Independent*

Party identification

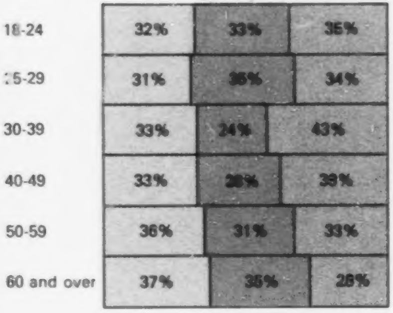
CBS News/*New York Times* 1980



CBS News/*New York Times* 1984



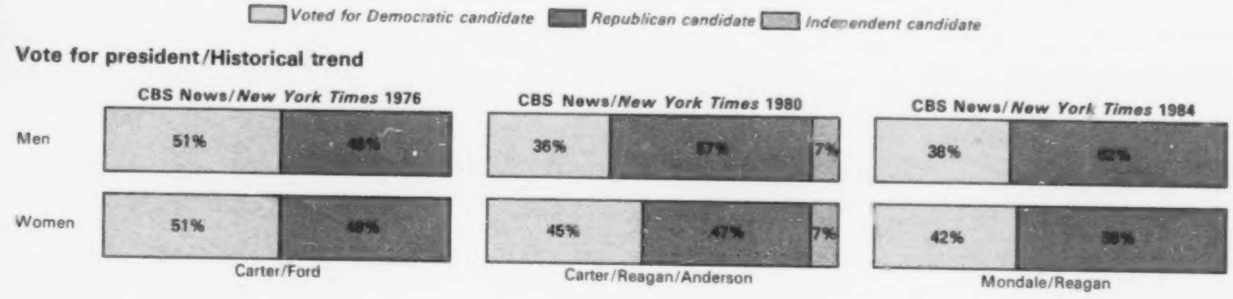
***Los Angeles Times* 1984**



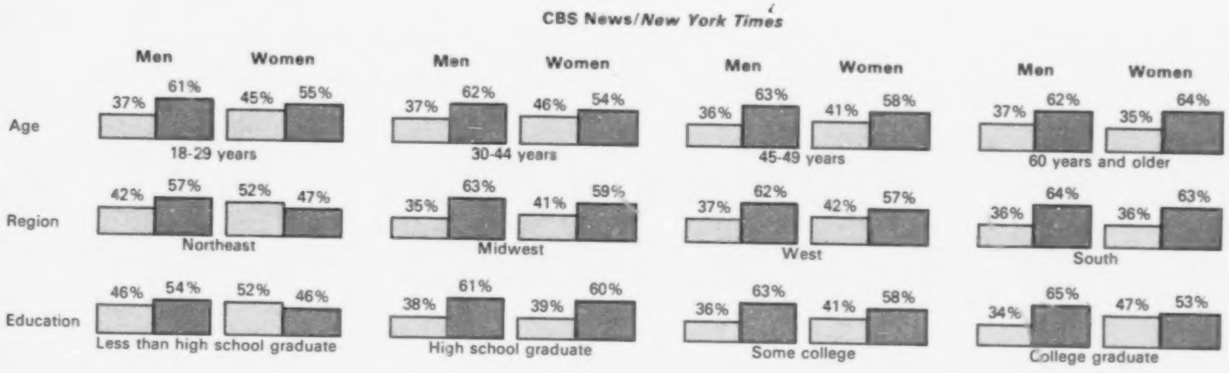
GROUP VOTING

SEX

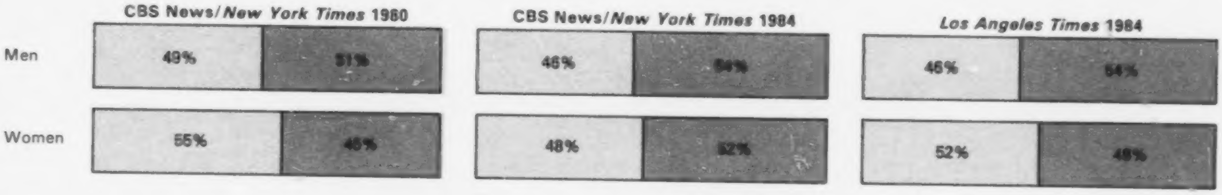
Vote for president/Historical trend



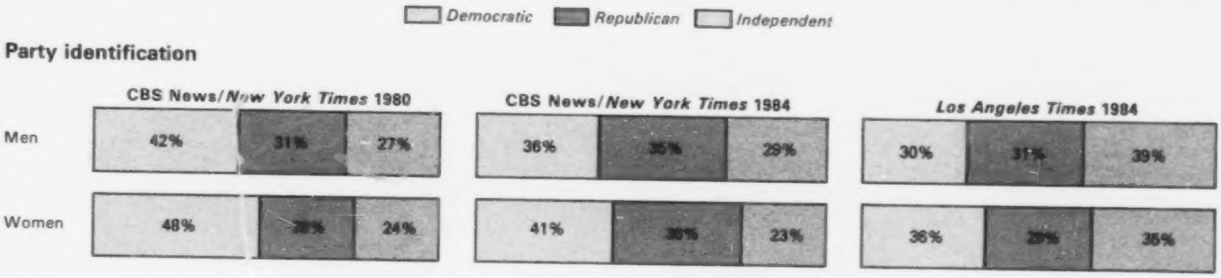
Vote for president, 1984



Vote for House of Representatives



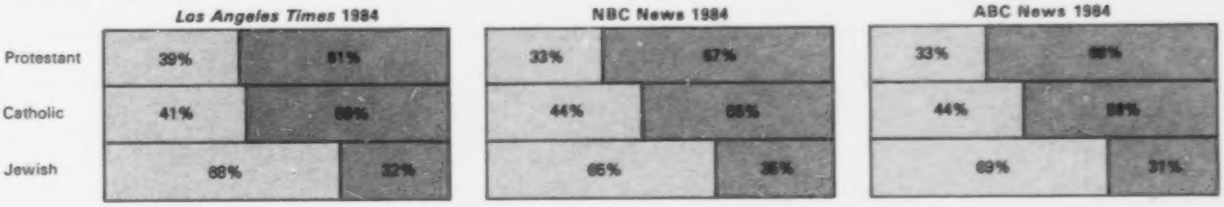
Party identification



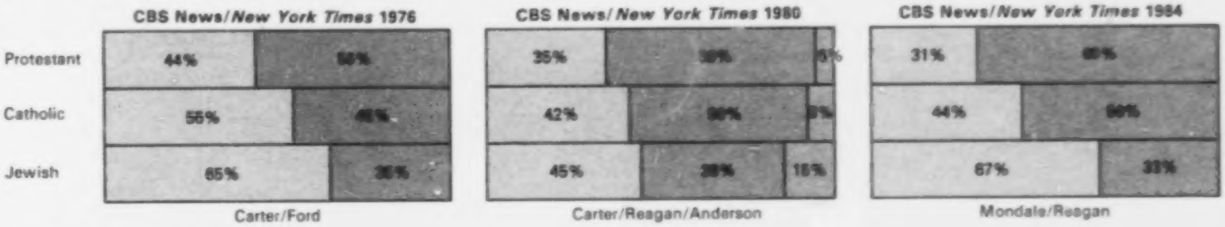
RELIGION

▢ *Voted for Democratic candidate* ▨ *Republican candidate* ▧ *Independent candidate*

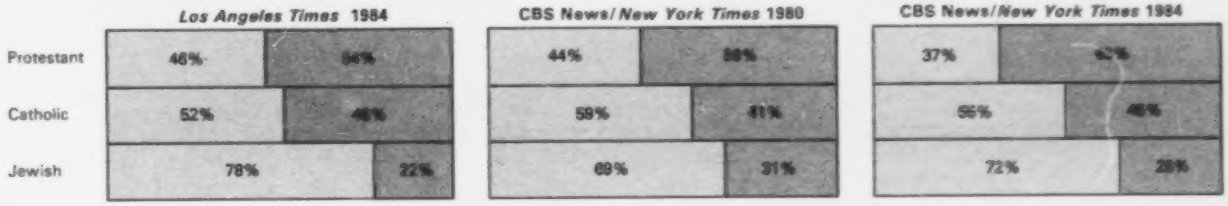
Vote for president



Vote for president/Historical trend

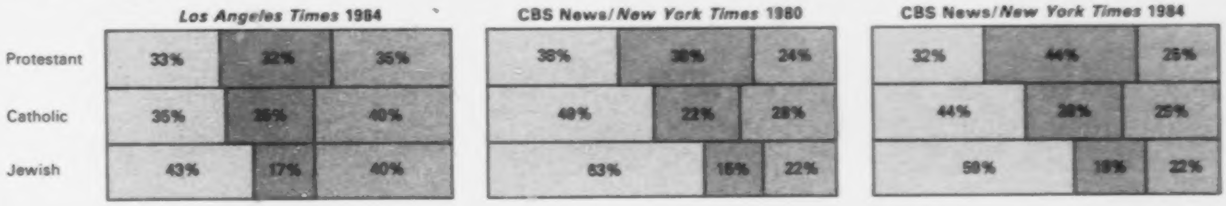


Vote for House of Representatives



▢ *Democratic* ▨ *Republican* ▧ *Independent*

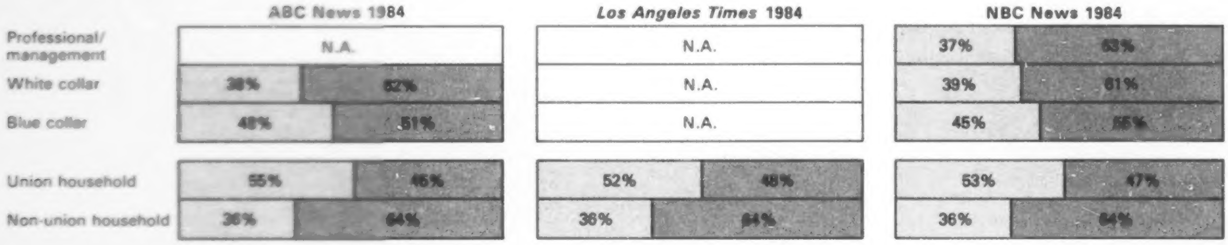
Party identification



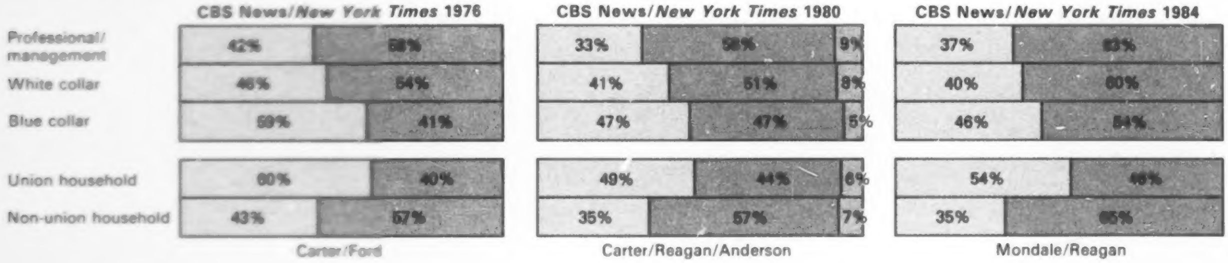
OCCUPATION /UNION MEMBERSHIP

▭ *Voted for Democratic candidate* ▩ *Republican candidate* ▨ *Independent candidate*

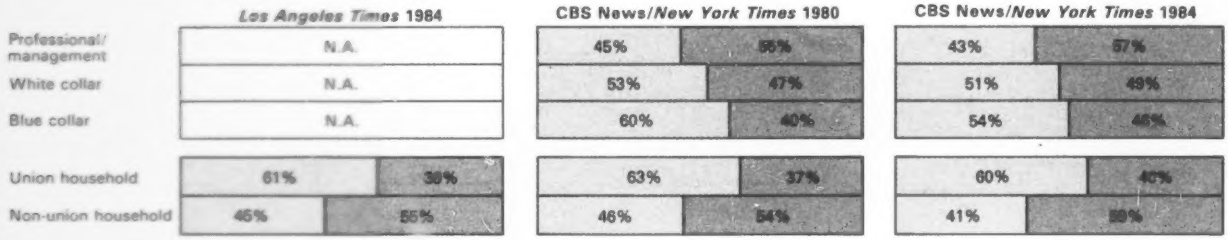
Vote for president



Vote for president/Historical trend

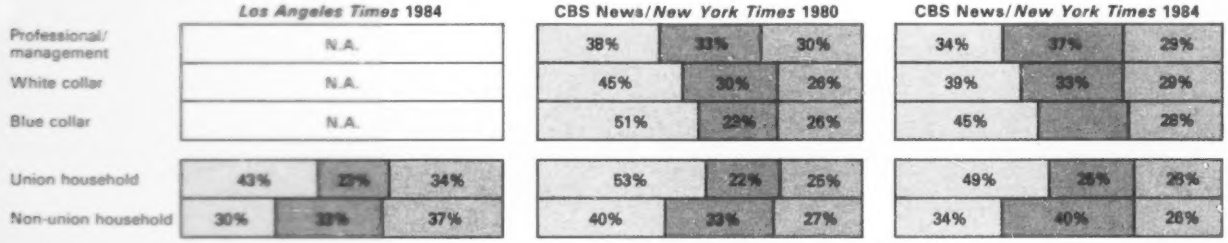


Vote for House of Representatives



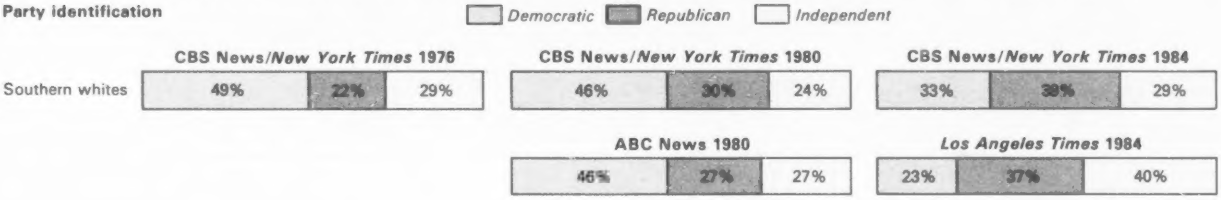
▭ *Democratic* ▩ *Republican* ▨ *Independent*

Party identification

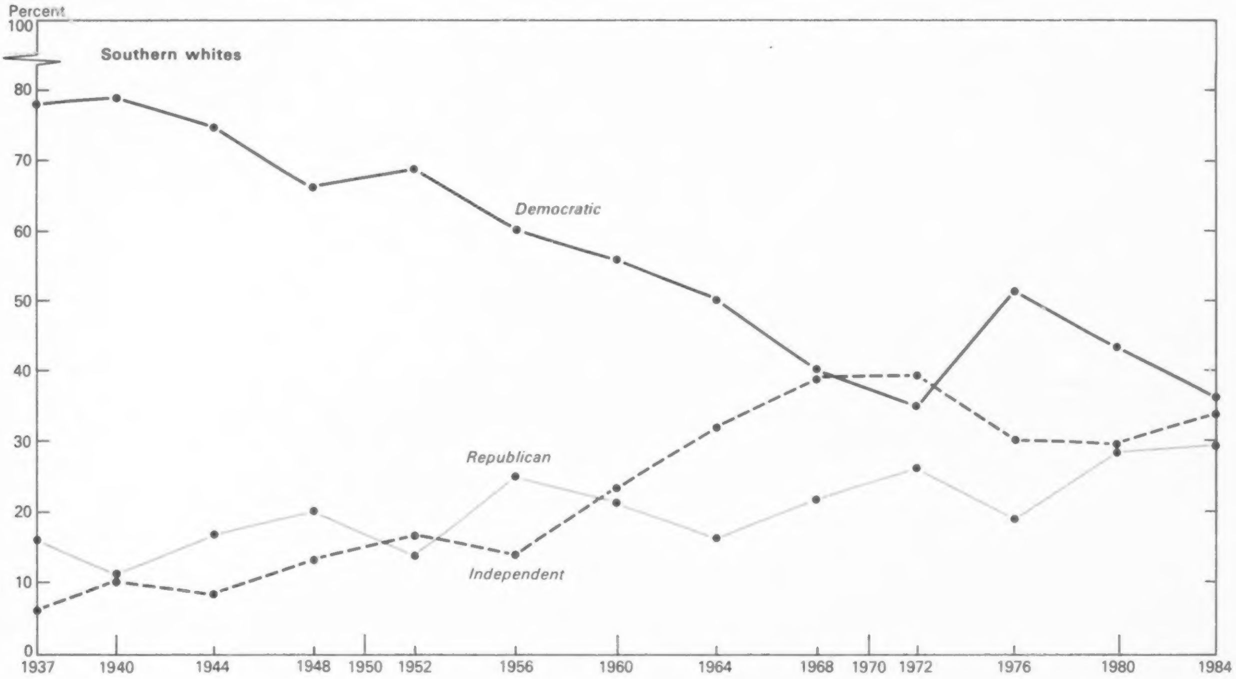


SOUTHERN WHITES: THE GREAT CONVERSION

Party identification

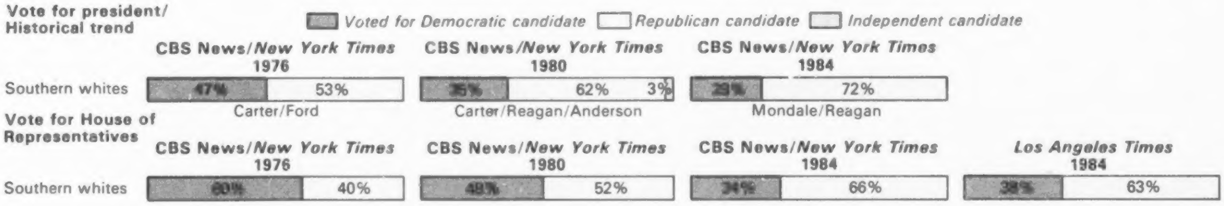


Party identification/Historical trend



	1937	1940	1944	1948	1952	1956	1960	1964	1968	1972	1976	1980	1984
Democratic	78%	79%	75%	67%	69%	60%	56%	50%	40%	35%	51%	43%	37%
Republican	16	11	17	20	14	25	21	17	22	26	19	28	29
Independent	6	10	8	13	17	14	23	32	38	39	30	29	34

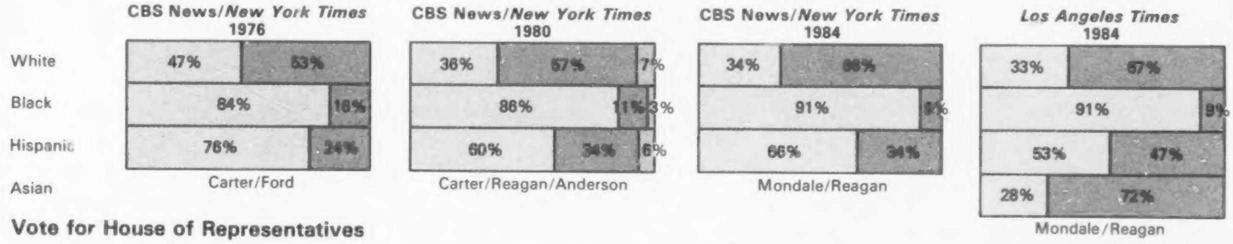
Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of July 27-30, 1984.



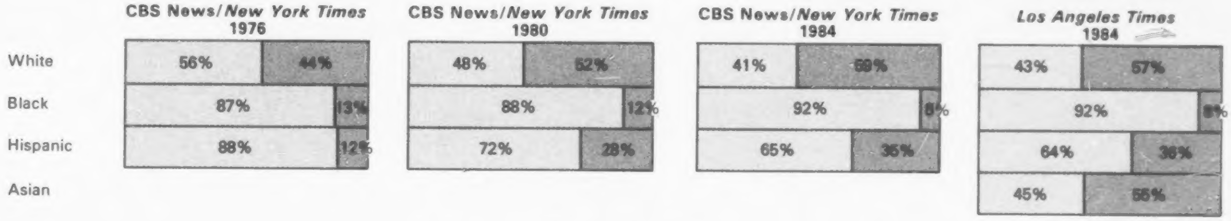
ETHNICITY

☐ *Voted for Democratic candidate* ▨ *Republican candidate* ▨ *Independent candidate*

Vote for president/Historical trend

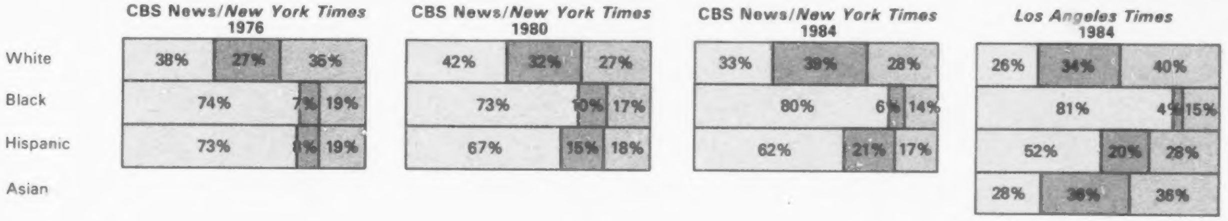


Vote for House of Representatives

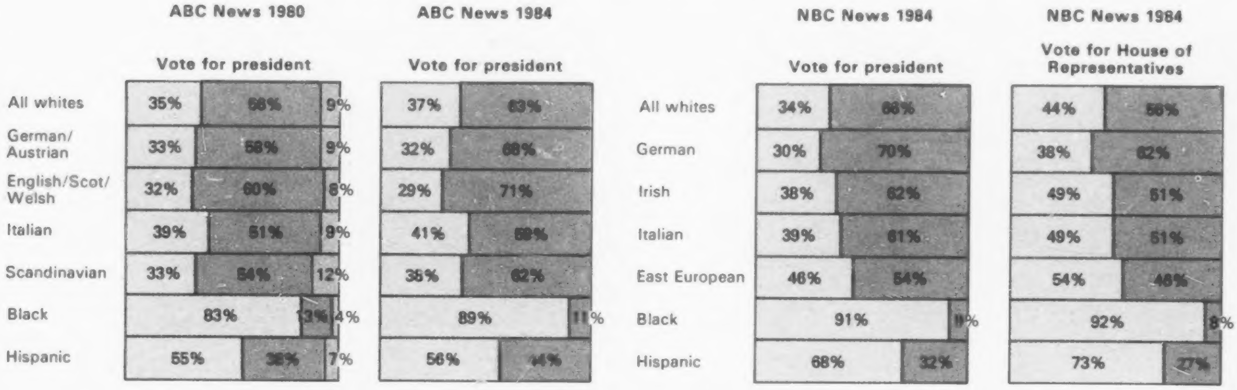


☐ *Democratic* ▨ *Republican* ▨ *Independent*

Party identification



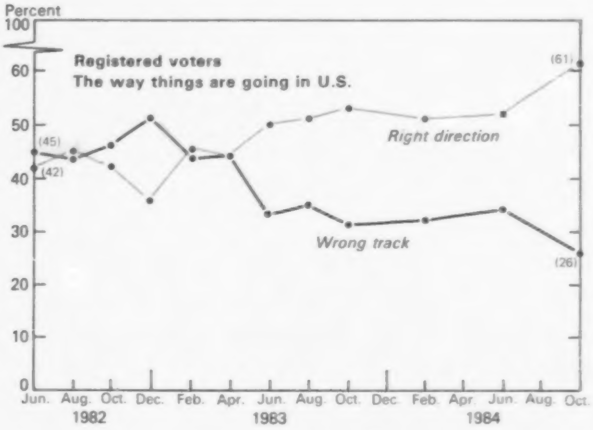
☐ *Voted for Democratic candidate* ▨ *Republican candidate* ▨ *Independent candidate*



V ISSUES IN

A GOOD TIME TO BE AN INCUMBENT

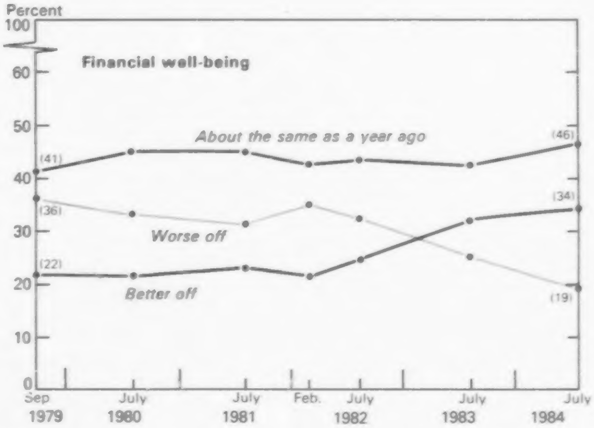
Question: In general, do you think that things in the United States are going in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?



Note: Sample size for June, August, October and December 1982 = 1,000 registered voters; February 1983 = 1,019 rv; April 1983 = 1,003 rv; June 1983 = 1,025 rv; August 1983 = 1,010 rv; October/November = 1,002 rv; February 1984 = 1,008 rv; June 1984 = 1,005 rv; October 1984 = 1,001 rv.
The "don't know" response ranges from 11 to 17 percent.

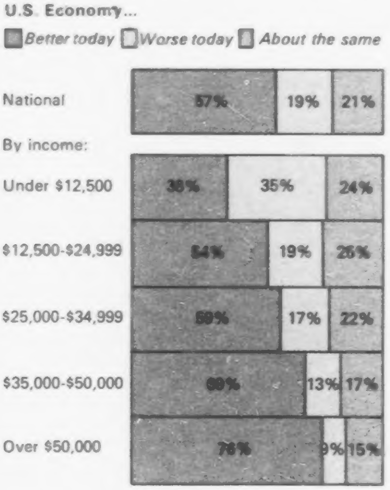
Source: Surveys by Penn + Schoen for the Garth Analysis, latest that of October 10-12, 1984.

Question: Taking all things into consideration, money you may have made or lost, changes in your income, what you have done about savings or investments, your present-day living expenses —*all* considered—do you feel you are better off now than you were a year ago, worse off or about the same?



Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-7) latest that of July 7-14, 1984.

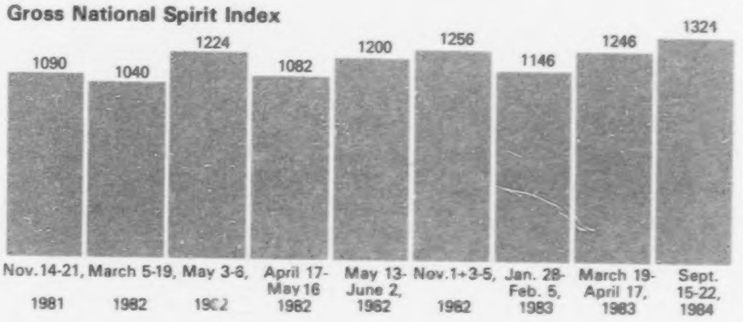
Question: Compared to four years ago, is the U.S. economy: better today, worse today, or about the same?



Note: Sample size = 8,671 voters as they left booths. The survey was not conducted in the states of Washington, Alaska, or Hawaii.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 6, 1984.

THE GROSS NATIONAL SPIRIT INDEX



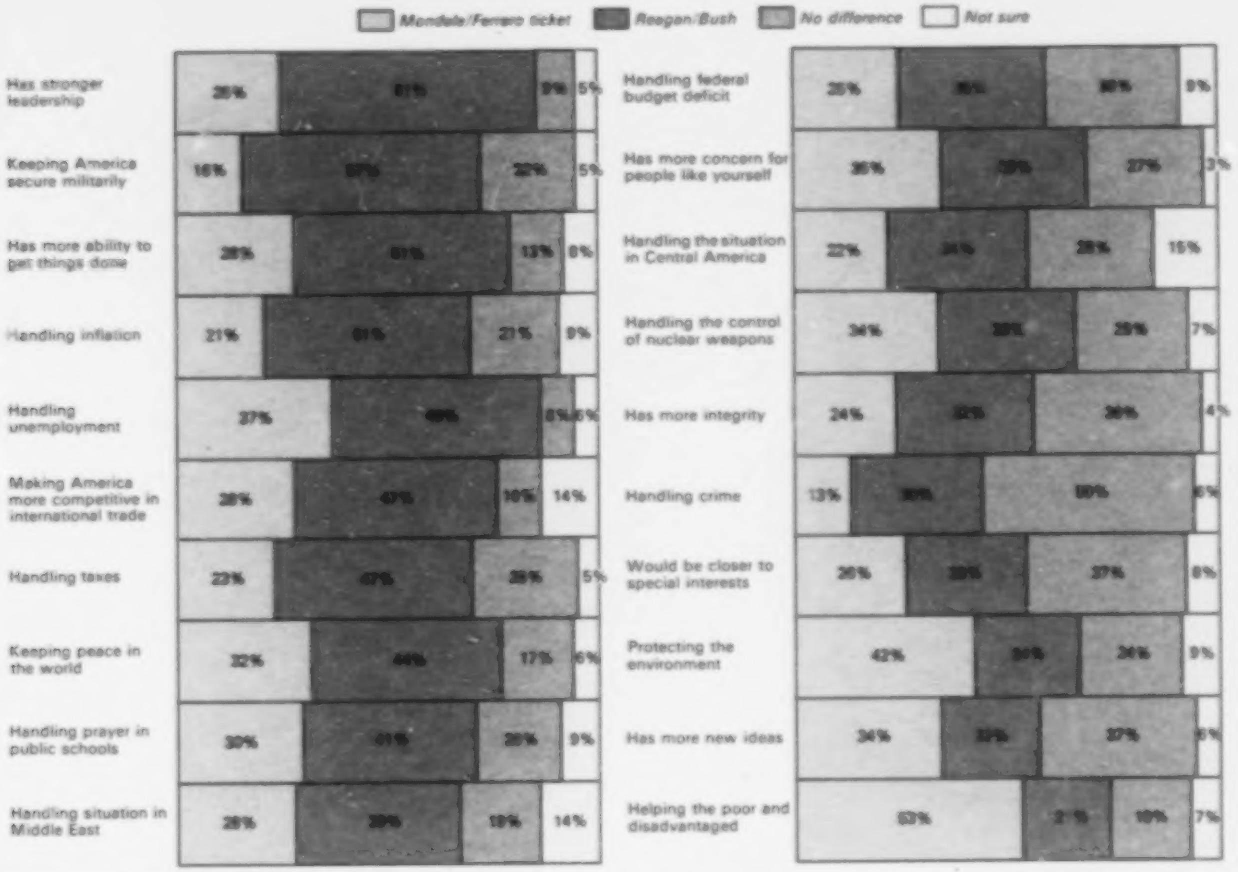
Note: In June of 1981, *Public Opinion* magazine introduced the Gross National Spirit Index. The index is comprised of six questions: (1) In general, how satisfied are you with the way things are going in the United States today? Are you very satisfied, more or less satisfied, or not at all satisfied?; (2) Over the next year or so, do you think things will go better for the United States, go worse, or stay about the same?; (3) Over the next year or so, do you think the United States economy will get better, get worse, or stay about the same?; (4) Do you approve or disapprove of the way (name incumbent) is handling his job as president?; (5) How satisfied are you with the way things are going for you personally? Are you very satisfied, more or less satisfied, or not at all satisfied?; (6) How satisfied are you with your family's financial situation? Are you very satisfied, more or less satisfied, or not at all satisfied?

Source: Surveys by Roper Organization/Roper Center for the American Enterprise Institute, November 14-21, 1981, Civic Services Inc., March 5-19, 1982; Audits and Surveys for the Merit Report, May 3-6, 1982; Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the American Council of Life Insurance (ACLI), April 17-May 16, 1982; William Hamilton and Associates for ACLI, May 13-June 2, 1982; William Hamilton and Associates for the Health Insurance Institute of America, November 1 and 3-5, 1982; Civic Services Inc., January 28-February 5, 1983; Yankelovich, Skelly and White for ACLI, March 19-April 17, 1983; Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-9), September 15-22, 1984.

CAMPAIGN '84

REAGAN'S STRENGTH: COMPARING TICKETS

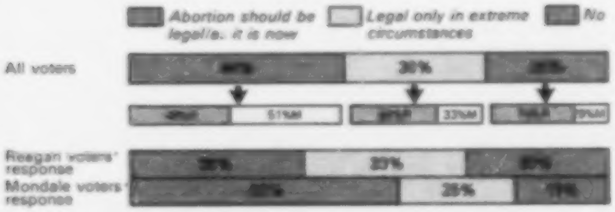
Question: Regardless of which candidates for president and vice-president you happen to prefer right now, which ticket do you think would do the best job of handling . . . or don't you think there would be any difference between them?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, October 12-15, 1984.

ABORTION

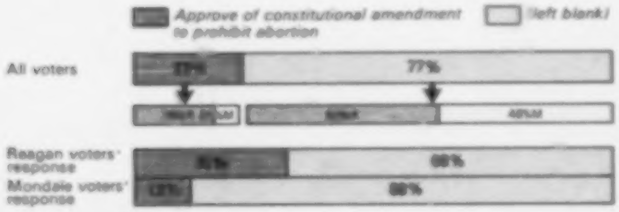
Question: Should abortion be legal?



Note: Sample size = 8,671 voters as they left voting booths. The survey was not conducted in the states of Washington, Alaska or Hawaii.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 6, 1984.

Question: Mark an "X" if you approve of any of the following programs and leave it blank if you don't.



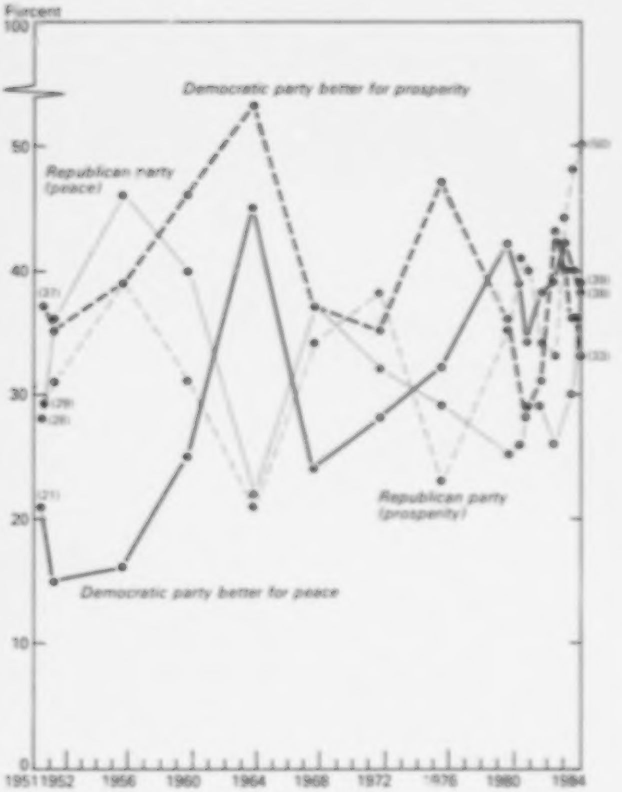
Note: 7,310 voters as they left the voting booths.

Source: Survey by *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1984.

VI IMAGES OF

GOP ON A ROLL?

Question: Looking ahead for the next few years, which political party do you think would be more likely to keep the United States out of World War III—the Republican party or the Democratic party?



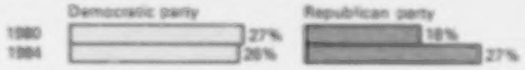
Question: Which political party—the Republican or the Democratic—will do a better job of keeping the country prosperous?

	Party . . .			
	Better for peace		**Better for prosperity**	
	Rep.	**Dem.**	**Rep.**	**Dem.**
September 1951	28%	21%	—	—
November 1951	—	—	29%	37%
January 1952	36	15	31	35
October 1956	46	16	39	39
October 1960	40	25	31	46
October 1964	22	45	21	53
October 1968	37	24	34	37
September 1972	32	28	38	35
August 1976	29	32	23	47
September 1980	25	42	35	36
April 1981	26	39	41	28
October 1981	29	34	40	31
October 1982	29	38	34	43
September 1983	26	39	33	40
April 1984	30	42	44	36
August 1984	36	40	48	36
September 1984	39	38	50	33

Note: "No difference"/"No opinion" (categories not separated by Gallup) not shown. This category ranges from 25-51% (peace) and 16-34% (prosperity).

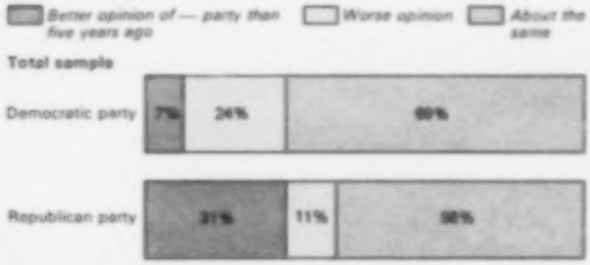
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, September 19-24, 1984.

Highly favorable (+4 and +5) ratings of Republican and Democratic parties using Stapel Scalometer rating



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, September 19-24, 1984.

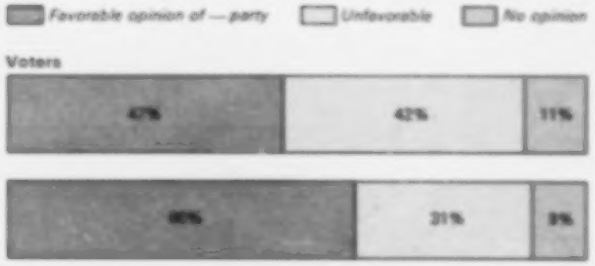
Question: Thinking back, do you have a better or worse opinion of the (Democratic/Republican) party than you had five years ago, or is it about the same?



Note: Sample size = 1,798 reinterviews of adults who were first interviewed in a pre-election survey.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 8-14, 1984.

Question: In general, is your opinion of the (Democratic/Republican) party favorable or not favorable?



Note: Sample = those respondents who said they voted in the presidential election = 75% of the 1,798 adults who had been interviewed in a preelection survey.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 8-14, 1984.

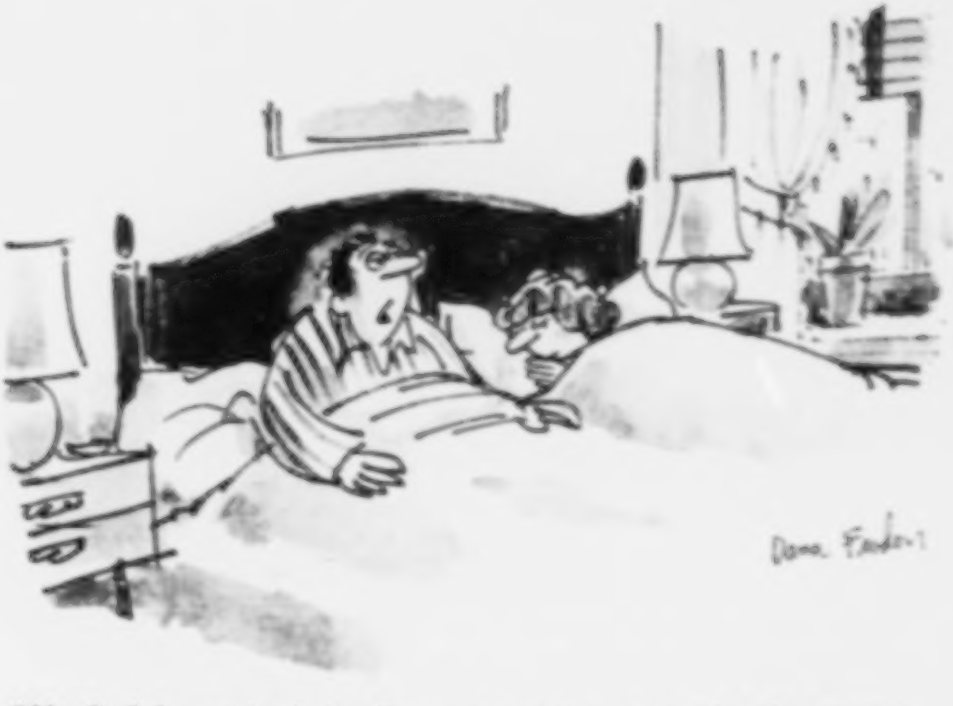
THE PARTIES

PARTY IDENTIFICATION

Question: Generally speaking, do you usually consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what? (CBS News/*New York Times*) Do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, or Independent? (CBS News/*New York Times* 1980) Do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, Independent, or Republican? (CBS News/*New York Times* 1984) Regardless of how you may have voted in the past, what do you usually consider yourself—a Democrat, a Republican, some other party, or what? (Roper) In politics, as of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent? (Gallup) Regardless of how you may vote, what do you usually consider yourself—a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent or what? (ABC News/Harris and Harris) Regardless of how you voted, in politics today do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or something else? (ABC News 1980 Exit poll) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, or Independent? (ABC News/*Washington Post*) Do you consider yourself a very strong Democrat, a fairly strong Democrat, an Independent, a fairly strong Republican, a very strong Republican, or something else? (*Los Angeles Times* 1984 Exit poll)

			1980				1984	
		Dem.	Rep.	Ind.		Dem.	Rep.	Ind.
CBS News/*New York Times*	9/10-14	46%	23%	31%	10/14-17	41%	26%	33%
	11/7-12	46	24	30	11/8-14*	32	32	36
CBS News/*New York Times* Exit poll**	11/4	45	30	26	11/6	38	35	26
Roper	9/27-10/4	48	25	26	9/15-22	44	31	25
Gallup	10/10-13	45	26	29	10/26-29	39	35	26
	11/7-10	42	[illegible]	32	11/30-12/3	40	31	29
ABC News/Harris†	8/14-18	46	29	25	10/26-11/5	44	34	21
ABC News Exit poll**	11/4	42	29	29	11/6	39	33	29
ABC News/*Washington Post*					9/7-11	39	26	34
Los Angeles Times Exit poll**					11/6	34	30	36

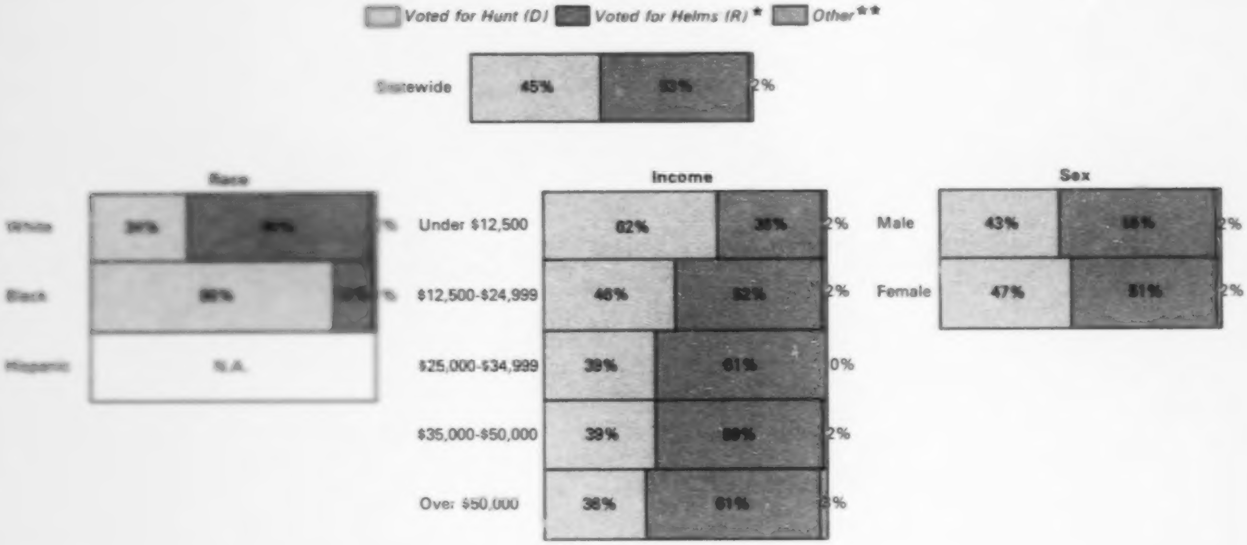
Note: * = Voted in 1980 presidential election. ** = voters as they left booths. † = likely voters.



"My God! I went to sleep a Democrat and I've awakened a Republican."

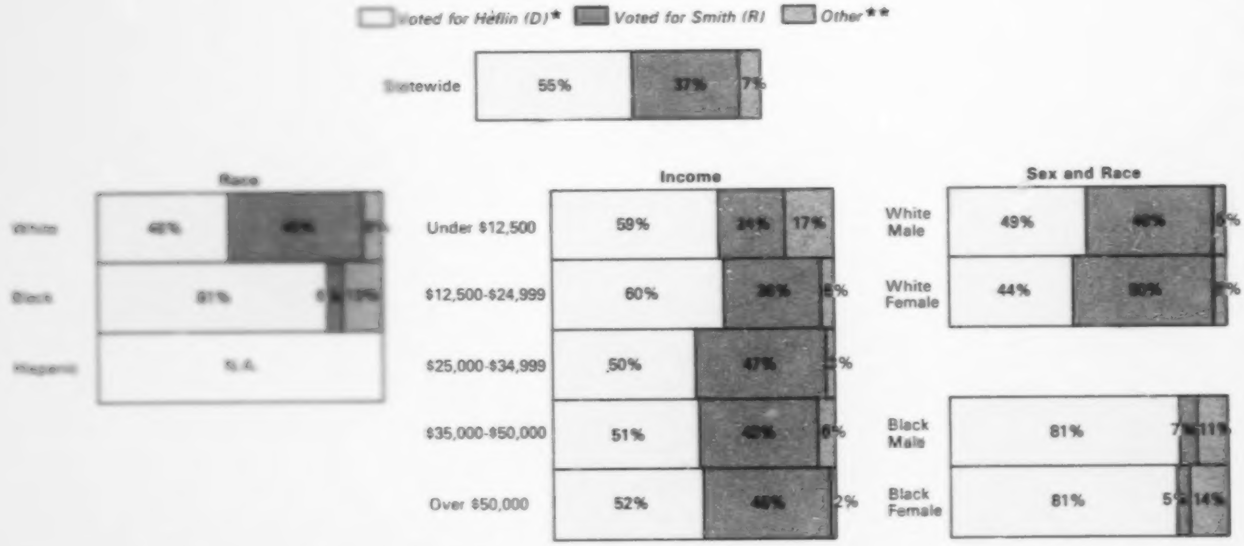
Drawing by Dana Fradon; © 1984
The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

NORTH CAROLINA



Note: Sample size = 2,157 North Carolina voters as they left the polls.
Source: Survey by CBS News/New York Times, November 6, 1984.

ALABAMA

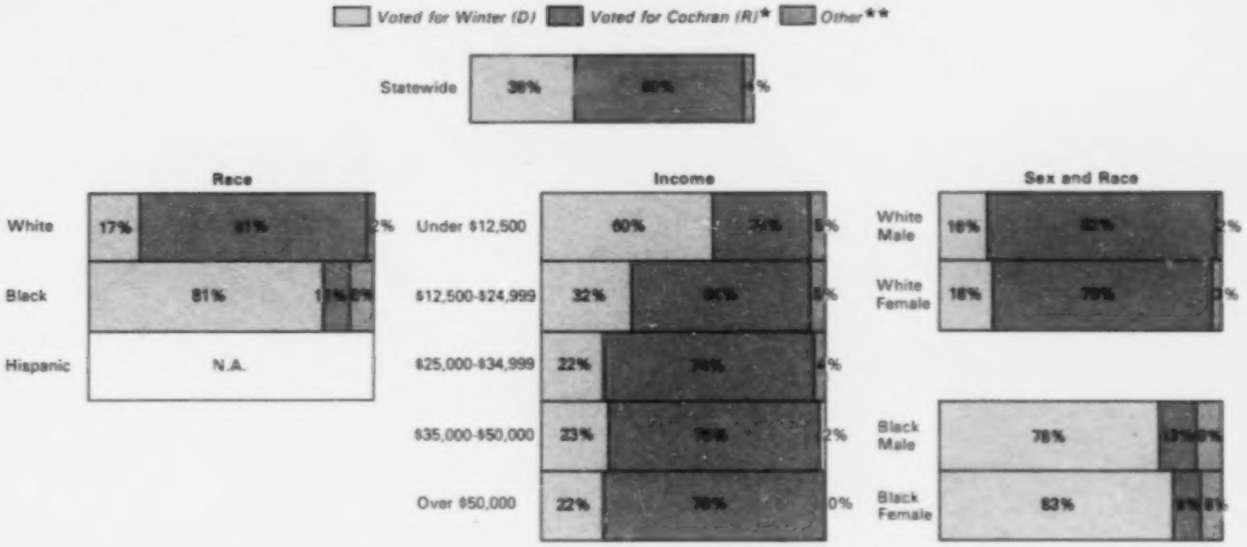


Note: Sample size = 2,178 Alabama voters as they left the polls.
Source: Survey by CBS News/New York Times, November 6, 1984.

* = Victor.
** = Those who voted for another candidate, who voted for president but not for

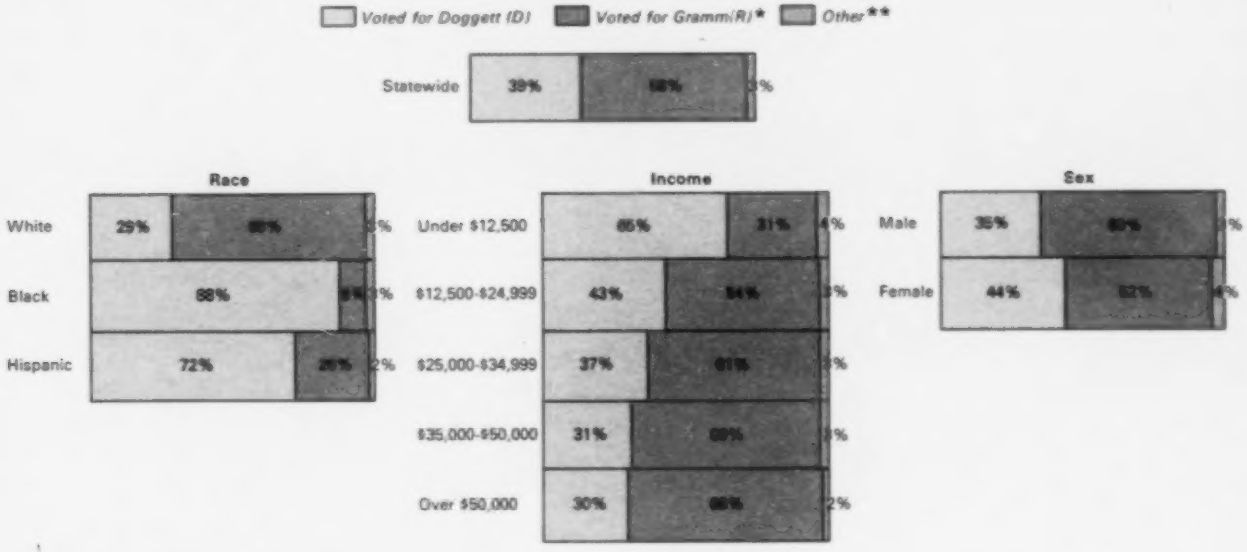
RESULTS

MISSISSIPPI



Note: Sample size = 1,716 Mississippi voters as they left the polls.
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 6, 1984.

TEXAS



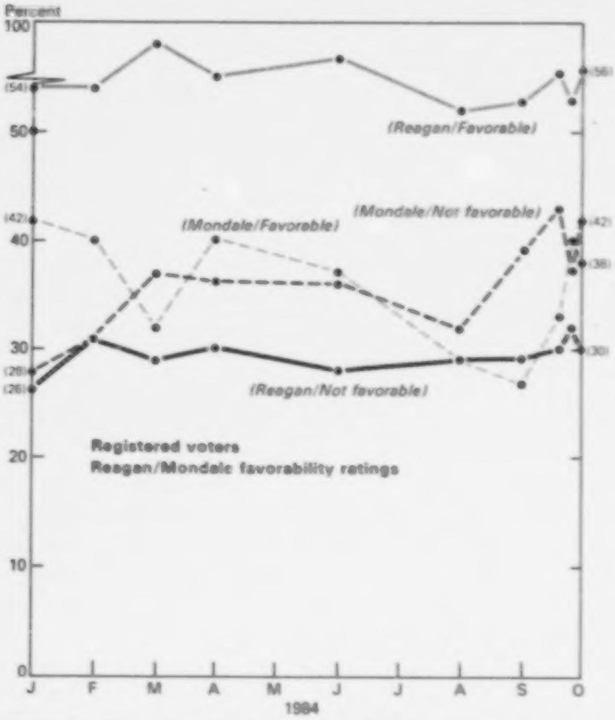
Note: 2,367 Texas voters as they left the polls.
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 6, 1984.

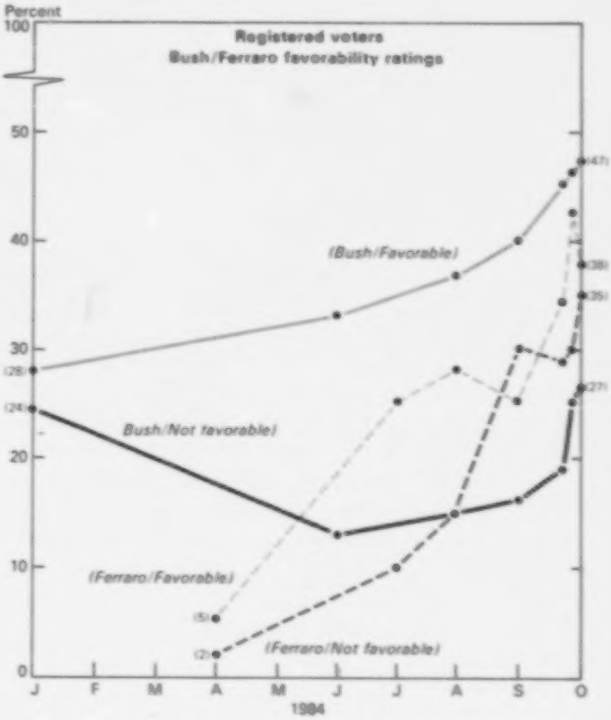
senator, or who did not want to say for whom they voted for president.

VIII THE CANDIDATES

IMAGES

Question: I'm going to name some candidates and ask what you think of them. If you haven't heard much about someone I name, just tell me. Is your opinion of . . . favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about . . . yet to have an opinion? (If "don't know," ask: "Are you undecided or have you not heard enough about him?")

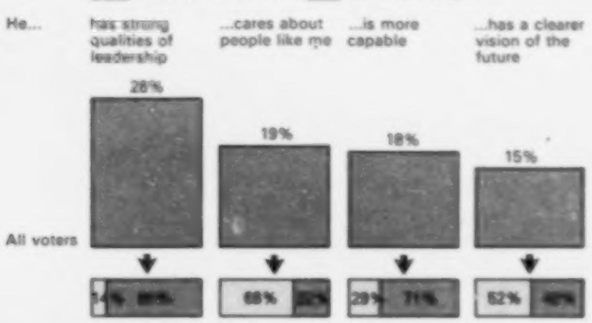




Note: Total sample size for January 1984 = 1,443 adults; February 1984 = 1,410 adults; April 1984 = 1,367 adults; October 23-25, 1984 = 1,463 adults. Undecided (Not heard enough/Refused) for Reagan ranges from 12-20%; for Mondale from 21-38%; for Bush from 27-55%; and for Ferraro from 27-94%.

Source: Surveys by CBS News/*New York Times*, latest that of October 23-25, 1984.

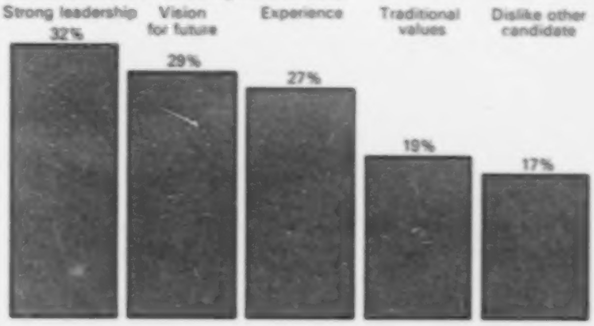
Question: In the presidential election, whom did you just vote for? Why did you vote for him? (Check only one.)



Note: Sample size = 7,310 voters as they left booths. Categories receiving less than 10% are not shown.

Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 1984.

Question: And which of these factors mattered most (in deciding how to vote?) (Check up to 2 boxes.)



Note: Sample size = 8,671 voters as they left booths. Categories receiving less than 10% are not shown. Survey was not conducted in the states of Washington, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Source: Surveys by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 6, 1984.

by Maura Clancey and Michael J. Robinson

The Media in Campaign '84

General Election Coverage: Part I

Nineteen eighty-four's election victory may prove to be sweeter for conservatives than the election of 1980, and not so much because Reagan carried five more states or 8 percent more votes. In 1984, conservatives think they have what they lacked after the 1980 landslide—evidence that the television networks were guilty of liberal bias in covering the campaign.

In 1980 our research indicated that the networks covered "the issues" objectively and actually treated liberals worse than conservatives.[1] The networks covered liberal darling Teddy Kennedy more harshly than middle-of-the-roader Jimmy Carter during the early stages of that race, and then turned right around and treated Carter more negatively than Ronald Reagan during the rest of the campaign. In the end, the Carter-Reagan election news coverage was a mystery to those conservative press critics determined to unearth a "liberal" media.

But, at least at first blush, there seems to be little mystery this time: Right-of-center press watchers like John McLaughlin, Phil Nicolaides, and Pat Buchanan have already concluded, publicly and emphatically, that media coverage of Reagan, Bush, Mondale, and Ferraro supports their case concerning ideological bias in network news.

We don't know—can't know, really—if McLaughlin, Nicolaides, or Buchanan are correct about network motives. But our quantitative evidence from all three networks indicates that correspondents in the general election campaign of 1984 did, in almost every respect, treat Reagan and Bush much more negatively than Mondale and Ferraro.

In this two-part series, we plan to do three things with our data from 1984. In part one, we will document that Reagan and Bush received much worse press on network news than the opponents they defeated so handily. In this article, we'll also take on a second more difficult assignment. We'll argue that conservative critics are mostly *wrong* about the reasons the networks wound up carping more about the Republican than Democratic ticket and are wrong in believing that our data prove liberal bias in TV news.

In part two we'll consider what is the bigger story and clearly this year's greatest media mystery: how it was that Reagan and Bush could sustain so much more bad press than Mondale and Ferraro and still carry forty-nine states.

What We Did

Starting on Labor Day and continuing through election day, a team of five sifted through tapes from all three network evening news programs, distilling from about 200 broadcasts all the news about President Reagan or his White House; about the presidential or vice-presidential race; about lower level elections or state and local referendums. All told, we analyzed 790 stories, but for this report we concentrated on the 625 news items that dealt specifically with the presidential or vice-presidential campaign.

Every piece was scored on two dozen separate dimensions, some as straightforward as length or date of the story, some as slippery as press "spin" or ideological tilt. There is no magic to what we did—our training was collective, we used specific rules, and we reached consensus on almost every decision, despite the very different political views of our group.[2]

Reagan's "Packaging" vs. Mondale's "Coordination"

In mid-October, Roger Mudd did a report on this year's "spin patrols"—campaign officials or other partisans who flew to the debates and tried to put the best possible "spin" on their man's (or woman's) performance.

We were pleased that Mudd popularized the term "spin"; we had been using it as a variable since September. But to us spin means something different—the way the correspondent interprets or embellishes the facts in a story. Spin involves *tone*, the part of the reporting that extends *beyond* hard news. On October 12, for example, Ronald Reagan's train trip through western Ohio was hard news. But when Dan Rather chose to label the ride "a photo-opportunity train trip, chock full of symbolism and trading on Harry Truman's old turf," Rather added "spin."

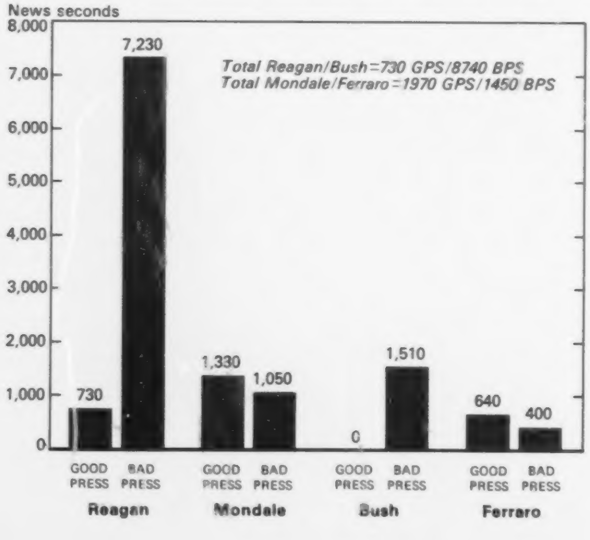
Throughout, we scored every story for its spin—the positive or negative implications about the candidates contained within the reporter's own words. And we used "spin" as our first and most important test of good and bad press.

There are two important things to remember about the spin measure: First, when the reporter's subjective comments about objective facts went in both directions (positive *and* negative), we almost always judged the piece "ambiguous." Second, we *excluded* from our spin variable all references to the horse race, defining the spin as interpretations of the candidate's *quality*, not his *electability*.[3]

There may be some questions about the validity of our measure, but there can be no question about the lopsidedness of what it uncovered. Assuming that a piece with a positive spin equals "good press," and assuming that negative spin equals "bad press," Ronald Reagan and George Bush proved overwhelmingly to be the "bad press" ticket of 1984. Figure 1 contains the number of news seconds we scored as good press or bad press for each of the candidates.[4] Ronald Reagan's bad press total was *ten times greater* than his good press total. (7,230 seconds vs. 730). In other words, his "spin ratio" was ten-to-one negative.

Figure 1

GOOD PRESS - BAD PRESS FOR EACH CANDIDATE



George Bush had a spin ratio that defied computation—1,500 seconds of "bad press" pieces and zero seconds of good press.

Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro, on the other hand, had slightly *positive* spin ratios—1,970 seconds of good press about themselves as people or potential leaders, and 1,450 seconds of bad press. Given what we know about the bad news bias of television, the fact that anyone, let alone any ticket, got more positive spin than negative is news indeed.

These numbers don't, however, tell us everything about spin. When Edith Efron examined news coverage of the 1968 (Humphrey-Nixon) campaign, she neglected to include news coverage that had no observable spin—or that had ambiguous spin.[5] Efron's omission was a serious one. In 1984, 74 percent of the total time on network evening news devoted to national candidates had no clear spin, negative or positive. What we analyze here is the 26 percent that did. In fact, one of the best reasons for not getting too excited about the positive ratio for Mondale/Ferraro is that 86 percent (!) of their news coverage had no clear spin. Even George Bush, the candidate with no good press, might take some comfort from knowing that 60 percent of his news time was neutral or ambiguous.

In this regard, Reagan is tied with Bush. Forty percent, precisely, of Ronald Reagan's press coverage on network television showed spin, but, as we've already seen, 90 percent of that was negative.

What did Reagan's bad press look like in qualitative terms? Commentaries, as expected, focused on his policy failures. John Chancellor, for example, blamed Reagan for the security lapses in Lebanon; George Will and John Chancellor both complained about Reagan's having injected religion into America's secular politics. Bob Simon at CBS did a powerful news analysis on the failures of Lebanon policy since Reagan first took charge, making it clear that many Americans felt the Marines in Lebanon had indeed died in vain.

In the noncommentary pieces, Reagan came in for a different kind of criticism—a near-constant barrage of closers or interpretive remarks implying that something wasn't right with Reagan. He was hiding behind his security squad, he was cut off from the public, or he was manipulating symbols, or he was feebleminded, or too old, or wasting taxpayers' money, or he was saying dumb things.

ABC's Sam Donaldson helped set the standard for bad tone with this mid-September piece:

> Mondale may demand deficit reduction specifics, and the president answers with one-liners. Mondale may warn of hard times ahead, and the president points to good times at hand. Mondale may issue a call to arms, and the president waves the American flag. If there are true issues in this cam-

> paign, they are being discussed but not joined.

And on October 4 Lesley Stahl did her quadrennial feature about the sinister nature of incumbency, focusing this time on Reagan's decision to run "a campaign in which he highlights the images and hides from the issues." Stahl told us that "the orchestration of television coverage absorbs the White House"; that "they aim to erase the negatives"; that "Mr. Reagan tries to counter the memory of an unpopular issue with a carefully chosen package (of videotape) that actually contradicts the president's policy." And Stahl even theorized about why Reagan "disappears" when things aren't quite right. "It's his gaffes," she concluded.

But NBC was at least as tough as CBS. (Table 1 suggests NBC was toughest across the board for all candidates.) And in fact, NBC did something that not only symbolizes Reagan's press problems, but also implies that Mondale did have (as our numbers indicate) an easier time of it on network news.

NBC's reporting is especially interesting because two very highly regarded correspondents essentially covered the same sort of action by Reagan and Mondale, yet treated Reagan critically, Mondale almost sympathetically.

Table 1

PRESS SCORES OF JOURNALISTS (FOR ALL STORIES)

Journalist	Score
JOHN SEVERSON, NBC	−36
LISA MYERS, NBC	−30
PHIL JONES, CBS	−27
LESLEY STAHL, CBS	−25
BOB KUR, NBC	−22
CHRIS WALLACE, NBC	−21
RICHARD THRELKELD, ABC	−19
DEAN REYNOLDS, ABC	−14
GEORGE WILL, ABC	−12
SAM DONALDSON, ABC	−11
SUSAN SPENCER, CBS	−9
CAROLE SIMPSON, ABC	−9
CONNIE CHUNG, NBC	−7
JAMES WOOTEN, ABC	−6
ROGER MUDD, NBC	−3
PETER JENNINGS, ABC	−1
LYNN SHERR, ABC	0
BETSY AARON, ABC	0
KEN BODE, NBC	0
JOHN CHANCELLOR, NBC	0
DAN RATHER, CBS	+1
TOM BROKAW, NBC	+1
BRIT HUME, ABC	+2
BOB SCHIEFFER, CBS	+3
BARRY SERAFIN, ABC	+6
BRUCE MORTON, CBS	+6
TED KOPPEL, ABC	+7
RITA FLYNN, ABC	+8
BILL PLANTE, CBS	+18

Network	Score
NBC	−10
ABC	−4
CBS	−3

Note: These numbers represent the percentage of good press pieces minus the percentage of bad press pieces for each journalist and for each network for all candidate stories. The figures include "spin" on both dimensions, "personal quality" and "horse-race favorability." We include only those correspondents who presented at least seven stories about the campaign.

On October 16, Chris Wallace presented a long and captious piece about (what else) Reagan's Hollywood-style, made-for-TV news campaign. The Wallace piece lasted five minutes, it linked Reagan's campaign to the Nixon gang from 1972, and its message was clear—Reagan was all media and staging. In fact, NBC titled the piece, with logo, "Packaging Reagan."

Yet three weeks earlier, on September 27, Roger Mudd had presented a three-minute feature about Mondale/Ferraro media techniques and strategies. The Mudd piece was in no way flackery; Mudd even concluded that the Mondale "message" was not getting through. But Mudd treated the Mondale/Ferraro media machinations as a good thing. He spoke of a "coordinated message" and described the staff as "seasoned veterans." What had been "packaging" for Reagan was now "coordination" for Mondale.

Campaign Issues: Nine of Ten Go against the Republicans

News has an agenda as well as a spin. Had the networks covered *only* Geraldine Ferraro's tax and financial matters during the campaign, regardless of the spin, that would have been a very different news agenda from one that included both her controversial tax returns *and* her adoring crowds. Had the networks covered only Reagan's record on inflation and never bothered to cover his record on deficits, that news agenda would have implied something important not just about Reagan but also about press behavior.

Of course, the networks did cover Ferraro's adoring crowds and did (though very infrequently) talk about Reagan's record on inflation. News agendas *are* tricky to define and even trickier to interpret, but in 1984 two interrelated findings about the news agenda suggest that the loser received better treatment than the winner on network news. The first has to do with what topics didn't get "normal" coverage in 1984. The second deals with the sort of topic that filled the vacuum.

(1) **Where's the horse-race news?** In virtually every campaign waged in the television era, the most frequent evening news story has been the on-the-road, horse-race piece—the reporter covers the day's campaign events and then assesses the candidate's motives and/or the electorate's possible response.[6] In 1984, though, horse-race journalism did *not* represent the most prevalent form of campaign reporting. *Campaign issues* pieces were emphasized instead. Campaign issues are not policy issues. Policy issues involve enduring disputes about how *government* should behave; campaign issues involve short-term concerns about how *candidates* or their campaigns should behave. In 1976, for example, a major campaign issue was Ford's remark about political freedom in Eastern Europe and what it indicated about his intelligence; in 1980 it was Carter's apparent meanness.

In 1984 campaign issues surged forward as a press focus, not only passing traditional horse-race reporting but also coming to represent almost *40 percent* of the campaign coverage.

There are two plausible explanations for the network's declining focus on the horse race and increasing interest in campaign issues. One, clearly, is that there was no horse race to cover. With Mondale/Ferraro consistently trailing in the polls, horse-race pieces became tiresome early on.

A second theory is that the media shifted to campaign issues when it became clear that emphasizing the horse race might be beneficial to the horse and jockey who were winning. If bandwagons still exist, horse-race journalism in 1984 could have been expected to help Reagan, and reporters could be expected to know it. Again, in these terms, Reagan and Bush came up short on the evening news.

(2) **The Agenda of Campaign Issues: Whatever Happened to John Zaccaro?** Horse-race journalism consumed less of the campaign news time in 1984, and what the networks used to fill the void made Reagan/Bush press losers again. In covering campaign issues, as opposed to policy issues, the news media are more free to pick and choose. This time, unlike 1980, they picked a news agenda that was decidedly bad for the Republicans.

Table 2 contains the twenty most fully covered "campaign issues" in the general campaign, debate coverage excepted. Nine of the top ten were campaign issues that were "bad news" issues for the GOP. Only one of the first ten was a bad news issue for the Democrats—the imbroglio between Geraldine Ferraro and her church, especially her verbal battle with Archbishop John O'Connor.

Reagan's suggestions that the Beirut embassy bombing was Carter's fault, or was akin to kitchen remodeling was the most fully covered campaign issue. The "age issue" came next: coverage of Reagan's having grown too old to debate, or maybe to think. Two nights after the debate ABC gave us three pieces in a row discussing Reagan's age: what we label the "senility trilogy." Next on the list was Reagan's "inaccessibility," one of the networks' favorites in September. Then Bush's feeble attempts to define "shame," from several dictionaries. Eventually the networks moved us on through the CIA manual controversy, the ties between Reagan and the fundamentalist preachers; the allegations concerning White House complicity in organizing hecklers against Mondale/Ferraro, and Bush's rudeness and personal behavior. The final of the top ten pieces was about "Donovangate."

Nothing says more about the network coverage in 1984 than this list of news topics. Neither Mondale's health problems (hypertension) nor Ferraro's confusion between "first use" and "first strike" made even the top twenty. Zaccaro/Ferrarogate comes in surprisingly low (Number 12). In toto, the Republicans endured a bad news agenda that was about five times greater than that given the Democrats (125 stories versus 25).

Table 2

AMOUNT OF ATTENTION GIVEN TO TOP TWENTY "CAMPAIGN ISSUES"*

1.	Beirut (as a campaign issue)	17 stories
2.	Reagan's age	15
3.	Bush's "shame" remark	12
4.	Reagan's availability	12
5.	CIA assassination manual	11
6.	*Ferraro vs. O'Connor/Church*	11
7.	Reagan/Religious ties	10
8.	Reagan/Heckler ties	9
9.	Bush's campaign behavior—("kick ass" included)	8
10.	"Donovangate"	8
11.	"Meesegate"	8
12.	*Ferraro/Zaccaro finances*	5
13.	Heckling/General**	5
14.	*Mondale/Gromyko meeting*	5
15.	Vetoes of journalists/debate one**	5
16.	Bush's blind trust/Taxes	4
17.	*Ferraro's credentials*	4
18.	Barbara Bush's remarks	3
19.	Campaign ethics generally**	3
20.	TV political ads**	3

Note: *Debate coverage is not included here. **Bipartisan issues. The issues in italics are those that focused on the Democrats.

Debate Coverage
Mondale 1, Reagan and Bush 0

The reality of the debates—who won, who lost—is as tricky a topic as any pundit can ponder. But nobody—not even Reagan—disputes that the president lost the first debate.

As for the second round, most print journalists felt that, given what he had to do, Reagan probably did win. And most polls showed that George Bush won the vice-presidential debate by either a little or a lot. The Democrats, then, won one debate by a lot, and the Republicans won two, but by much closer scores.

But this was not the picture we got from network news—at least not from the *personal* analyses presented by the on-camera correspondents. Looking at what the reporters concluded about the debates (when they were not merely reciting polls) one finds something remarkable: in twenty-seven stories, network correspondents made personal assessments implying either that Mondale had won the first debate or that Reagan had lost it. Not once did these reporters make any similar personal assessments about Bush's victory in his debate with Ferraro. And when Reagan won his second debate with Mondale, the network correspondents acknowledged it only twice, all the more remarkable given that Reagan's performance in the last debate probably mattered at least as much as his showing in the first. Indeed, Reagan received more than thirteen times as much evening news comment for losing the first debate as he did for winning his second.

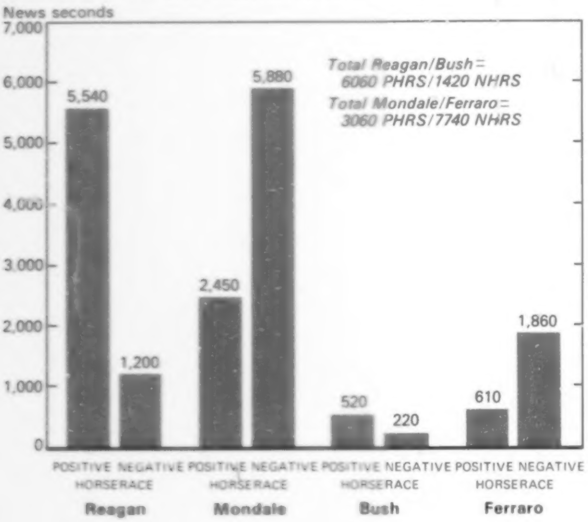
On the day following the vice-presidential debate, the networks virtually ignored Bush's on-camera performance. All three turned instead to Bush's off-color, off-camera, off-handed remark about "kicking a little ass." Bush got more coverage for his "kick-ass" comment than for any other aspect of his debate appearance.

Horse-Race Predictions—Finally: One for the GOP

Other than the good press Reagan got for his hurry-up meeting with Andrei Gromyko, did the networks favorably cover anything about him or his ticket? Yes, horse-race coverage was an unambiguous press victory for Reagan/Bush. Figure 2 contains the amount of newstime for each ticket devoted to pieces in which the correspondent said or implied something favorable or unfavorable about the principal candidate's status in the horse race.

Figure 2

POSITIVE - NEGATIVE HORSE RACE FOR EACH CANDIDATE



This measure tests whether the correspondent goes beyond citing polls and clearly implies that the campaign is going well or badly for the featured candidate. This is horse-race spin, in essence.

And spin about the horse race favored Reagan/Bush over Mondale/Ferraro. As figure 2 indicates, horse-race assessments ran four-to-one positive for Reagan/Bush three-to-one negative for Mondale/Ferraro.

Throughout the campaign, the Democrats complained more about press coverage than the Republicans. Democrats insisted that network correspondents were dumping on their man, their woman, and their campaign. The Democrats were right, but *only* when the "issue" was the horse race.

On the opening night of the general campaign, all three networks began what became a month's worth of poor-mouthing the Democratic chances. NBC's Lisa Myers (see table 1) seemed particularly hard on Mondale's political condition, something the Mondale people noticed early on. Even after the first debate, the networks failed to give Mondale much copy suggesting he could somehow win the election. Mondale, in fact, earned much less credit for winning the first debate than Reagan was blamed for losing it.

On the other side, the networks did consistently give Reagan/Bush credit for winning the race and for conducting a "masterful" campaign. Even in those pieces we've already quoted about Reagan's packaging, Reagan's hiding out, or Reagan's cynical campaign strategy, the correspondents acknowledged that all his posturing was working. The news themes throughout suggested that Reagan was clearly winning, but, if the truth were known, he shouldn't be.

Cosmic Press Measure

Astute readers have already raised the crucial question. Was the bad press concerning Democratic chances in the race equivalent to the bad press concerning the personal qualities of the Republican ticket? We have no way of knowing how voters responded, but we do have a "cosmic" measure that combines the press spin about each candidate as a *person* with his or her press coverage of position in the race.[7]

The cosmic index, which tries to balance "horse-race" and "leadership" press coverage, is more than twice as negative for Reagan/Bush (—37) as for Mondale/Ferraro (—15). Bush got what everybody now expects—a cosmic score worse than everybody else's (—55), one that reflects constant references to Bush's poor judgment, his intemperate behavior, his political liability to himself and Reagan. Reagan came in second to last (—33). Ferraro finished with a —28, and Walter Mondale won a Pyrrhic press victory (—10). Even with the horse-race assessments factored in, the only definitive conclusion is that the networks gave Reagan/Bush a measurably tougher time than Mondale/Ferraro.

Denying Liberal Bias

Is it possible to prove that all this did not result from liberal bias in network news? In a word, no, but there may be a better explanation. Given that the networks covered the conservatives so much more negatively than the liberals, the only thing we can do is (1) assert that partisan bias is not the best explanation, and (2) come up with an alternate explanation. We believe we can justify doing both, though probably not to the satisfaction of many conservative critics.

The Whys

At this point, nobody appreciates more than we the now legendary Rothman-Lichter findings about liberal attitudes of the network news corps.[8] Though we have no data for 1984, it is inconceivable to us that Mondale/Ferraro won less than the typical 85 percent of the vote "media elites" usually give to the Democrats in presidential elections.

But if it was "liberal" bias that the networks displayed in this general campaign, one has to ask some questions about the rest of the election year.

First, why did we find virtually no liberal bias on the policy *issues* in 1984? Of the 625 stories about the campaign, only 17 implied a liberal *or* conservative conclusion by the journalist on the issue at hand. And only 10 of the 17 were "liberal." What's more, most of those pieces were *commentaries*. The campaign *news* was practically devoid of issue bias.

Why did the liberal media never bother to mention Sonia Johnson or any of the other leftist candidates in the general campaign? And why did Mondale and Ferraro both wind up with negative cosmic scores?

And, we ask one last time, why in 1980, when the media had the chance to nip Reagan in the bud, did they give him less grief than they gave Carter? And why did they play it so negatively when Teddy Kennedy—a flesh and blood Kennedy—ran for president?

At the very least, these questions suggest that liberal bias is not the only explanation, or even the best.

Alternative Explanations

We know several journalists who are convinced that all this reflects nothing—or nothing but *reality*. To them news spin and news agenda were what the candidates deserved. In fact, we're even inclined to accept one of Reagan's own former White House people who invoked *reality* and said of George Bush: "He got bad press; he deserved bad press." But Bush is not Reagan, and Reagan's press is not simply reality.

We rejected the most sinister interpretation—that all or most of this press behavior reflects ideology. And now we also reject the most innocent interpretation—that Reagan's press involves nothing more than simple reality.

We refuse to believe, for starters, that reality explains why Reagan/Bush got five times as much news coverage of their problems (campaign issues) as Mondale/Ferraro, especially given all the allegations swirling around Ferraro.

Then what's left? We think the four "I's" have it: impishness; irritation; incumbency; and irrevocability. Taken together, with perhaps a dose of reality and a little touch of ideology as well, these four "I's" explain, we think, why Reagan/Bush looked so bad in the network news copy in this year's general campaign.

Impishness involves little more than Charlie Peters' old notion that reporters of all types prefer to cover a competitive horse race to a walkaway. So, journalists did little things to *produce* a horse race when none seemed to exist. Out of impishness, they played games with the news agenda, or even with spin, hoping to make the race tighten.

Some think impishness stems from commercial pressure—the need to maintain ratings. We think it's less commercial than personal—a human tendency to keep one's own work interesting—not so much for audiences but for those who themselves ride the news bus so long. Whatever the cause, judging by the tiny smirks on the correspondents' faces after the first debate, we think impishness explains at least some of the tendency to carp at Reagan/Bush more often than at Mondale/Ferraro.

But *irritation* strikes us as a bigger factor. Irritation suggests that network reporters behave less like leprechauns than prima donna professionals. Big-time campaign correspondents acknowledge that Reagan's skillful use of media time exasperated them. Since 1983, the press has consistently bemoaned what it considers Reagan's Teflon coating. But network people have an even further justification for feeling resentment—the White House *did* have an affinity for exploiting "photo opportunities" and one-liners in TV "cameo appearances." Given that Reagan's inaccessibility to press and public was the fourth most frequently covered campaign issue on network news, and the focus of two extraordinary features, we are convinced that irritation with the Teflon candidacy explains more than impishness in 1984.

But *incumbency* probably counts more than either of the above. Reporters simply feel that they have a special mission to warn Americans about the advantages any incumbent has. That, we believe, explains why Carter wound up doing so badly in 1980, and explains most of the content we saw on network news this time around.

Hal Bruno, political editor at ABC, acknowledges that network news winds up giving incumbents a tougher time. He says that reflects the fact that incumbents have active records to criticize. Fair enough. But we think it's both—a record to attack *and* a supposition by the media that the White House incumbent simply deserves a double standard from the press. It's the "compensatory journalism" that we saw in 1984. The press will always hold incumbents to a tougher standard, especially when they happen to be winning big in the race.

Irrevocability is a condition determined by the Twenty-second Amendment and its "two-term only" rule. Reagan would, if reelected, never face the electorate again. What more did the media need to justify a double standard in press coverage than Reagan's irrevocability in office? In short, the Constitution made them do it. When the press knows that this is the last shot voters will have—against a front-runner, no less—getting out the bad press becomes a near messianic mission.

Chris Wallace did something on election eve that proves the point. On election eve in 1980, all the network correspondents played it very straight when cov-

(Continued on page 59)

Clancey/Robinson

(Continued from page 54)

ering the candidate's last campaign day. It's the norm. After two long years of harassment, candidates can usually expect an election eve respite from bad press. But Wallace showed how seriously he was taking irrevocability when, in essence, he broke from that norm.

Wallace started out tough. "Today's sentimental journey through California ended the highly staged, low-risk campaign of a big front-runner." "A campaign long on glitz and short on substance, . . . a cynical campaign, manipulative." Wallace stayed tough: "Protecting a big lead, the president offered pomp and platitudes, but never told us what he planned to do the next four years." For Wallace, it was a last minute effort to get the bad news out before it was too late, with Reagan likely to go scot free in the morning.

None of this reporting, in retrospect, seems to have been inaccurate, let alone irresponsible. And quite clearly, the networks were not hyping Mondale/Ferraro in this campaign. What is clear is that with all the "I's" out against him, Reagan could have expected that the media would engage in a little naysaying about his campaign. Reagan was the incumbent, was ahead, was good at exploiting official symbols, and was saddled with a less capable running mate. What's more, Reagan really was and is a conservative candidate, a fact that could not possibly have helped him in the national press.

Given all of this, it was predictable that all the networks would practice a little compensatory journalism. Compensatory journalism shouldn't surprise—or even infuriate—anybody who understands the press. What did surprise a good number of pundits is how little difference any of this compensatory journalism seems to have made. And that surprise—the lack of impact—requires a second look. Next time we will look at what the networks did *not* do in 1984, and try to explain why voters paid so little heed to the news agenda and news spin that the networks were handing out in this campaign.

---

[1] *Over the Wire and On TV: CBS and UPI in Campaign '80*, Michael Robinson and Margaret Sheehan, Russell Sage Foundation, 1983.

[2] In the article we provide our definitions as we go along, section by section. But one important qualification needs to be made at the outset. We analyzed the journalists, their copy, and their nonverbal gestures. We did *not* analyze the candidates or their surrogates. If Reagan smiled warmly on camera or told an hilarious joke, we excluded Reagan's performance from our assessment of *news* content. We scored not what Reagan said or did, but instead what Sam Donaldson, Chris Wallace, or Bill Plante *et al.* said or did. Our entire emphasis here is on journalism, not the comprehensive "message." And it was the *journalism* that went very much against Reagan, warm smile or one-liners notwithstanding.

[3] Obviously we realize that reporters also employ "spin" in discussing the horse race. And we have a separate measure that allowed us to keep track of the way the networks treated each candidate's *chances*. But in 1980 we learned that network reporters tend to divide their news interpretations into two categories—those related to personal quality and those related to candidate status in the race. So we did the same in 1984: For us "spin" involved the reporter's remarks concerning the candidate's credibility, availability, vitality, integrity, consistency, decency, or "factuality." In essence, spin includes everything *but* "viability."

[4] We scored this for the *principal* candidate only. If a piece dealt with two candidates equally, we divided the story, and the time, in two.

[5] *The News Twisters*. Edith Efron, Nash Publishing, 1971.

[6] *The Unseeing Eye: The Myth of Television Power in National Elections*, Thomas Patterson and Robert McClure, G.P. Putnam, 1976; *The Mass Media Election: How Americans Choose Their President*, Thomas Patterson, Praeger, 1980.

[7] Cosmic measures for each candidate also include scores for news *topics*. A piece about Ferraro's fight with her church gives her a negative *one*, and if the "spin" is negative also, then Ferraro gets a minus two for the piece.

[8] S. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman, "Media and Business Elites," *Public Opinion*, October/November 1981.

The authors appreciate the support given this project by the George Washington University and by AEI. We also thank Lisa Grand, Eve Raimon, Maryann Wynne, Carin Dessauer, and Bobbie Chilcote for helping us do this research.

Interview

(Continued from page 11)

where a popular incumbent was running for reelection in good times with people generally endorsing the direction of his leadership. Some could say, in looking at that, that the election was over before it began. If you are in the middle of a campaign, you obviously can't start from that premise, but in looking at it analytically, is that the sense you have now?

Wirthlin: I wouldn't view it that way. Reagan, at the start of the campaign in January, had some tremendous advantages. But there were at least two or three times during the campaign when the difference between Reagan and Mondale was under 10 percentage points. Whenever you can get an incumbent down under 10, he is vulnerable. It happened in that period just before the Republican convention, from August the 16th to the 20th. It happened right after the Democratic convention, from the 20th to the 23rd of July, and, as I indicated before, it happened just prior to the second debate when it got down to about 11 points. Our closest spread was on the 20th of July: We showed the race at 49-41.

Hart: Wirthlin and I compared notes after the election, as any two baseball managers would. From September 1st through November 4th, our figures never varied from one another by more than 2 percent, so our candidates were each getting the same numbers.

Wattenberg: *It would save a lot of money if both candidates had the same pollster.*

Hart: Well, in the next round, he will do September, I'll do October. [Laughter]

Our first general election poll was done directly after the primaries, and we recognized as the underdog we would have to do things differently to win. You always believe it can be won and there were three things we believed we had to do.

One, we had to make the election a referendum on the future; number two, we had to take it to the issues where Walter Mondale and the Democrats were strongest and Ronald Reagan and the Republicans the weakest; and three, we had to deal with the question of leadership and strength.

As part of that, we have been asked why we selected a woman as vice-president. When you're behind, you are more than willing to have the cards reshuffled and dealt again. That gave us one of those unusual opportunities.

Wattenberg: *But if, as Wirthlin says, one of the reasons that you were behind was that your candidate and your philosophy were presumed to be too lib-*

$5.00

R2110-1

Public Opinion

Published by
American
Enterprise
Institute

Apr./May 1986

0009020 6
ACQUISITIONS EDITOR
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INDEX
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE
4520 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY
WASHINGTON DC 20014

WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT FEELING GOOD?

Robert Bellah and Walter Berns; Seymour Martin Lipset; Ronald Inglehart and Jacques-Rene Rabier; Ervin Duggan; Robert Shogan

The Politics of Protectionism by Kevin Phillips

Rendering What's Due: Views on Income Equality by Sidney Verba and Gary Orren

Public opinion

Volume 8, Number 2 April/May 1985

Publisher
William J. Baroody, Jr.

Co-Editors
Seymour Martin Lipset
Ben J. Wattenberg
Senior Editor
Everett Carll Ladd
Managing Editor
Karlyn H. Keene
Deputy Managing Editor
Victoria A. Sackett
Assistant Editor
Graham Hueber
Research Assistant
Kay Smith
Interns
Steve Kistulentz
Andrew Proctor
Ellen Sears

Editorial Board
David R. Gergen, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick,
Irving Kristol, Howard Penniman,
Austin Ranney, Richard M. Scammon,
Laurence H. Silberman, Herbert Stein,
and Richard J. Whalen

Editorial Associate
Marilyn M. Potter
Assistants
John Benson
Lois Timms

Art & Design Director
Pat Taylor
Chart Illustrator
Hördur Karlsson
Staff Editor
Elizabeth D. Ashooh

PUBLIC OPINION, April/May 1985, Vol. 8, No. 2. Published bimonthly by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. Copyright 1985 American Enterprise Institute. Subscription rates: $26.00 for one year, $48.00 for two years. Individual copy: $5.00. Information on bulk orders of multiple subscriptions available on request. Editorial and business offices: c/o AEI, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Send changes of address and all subscription correspondence to Circulation Department, c/o AEI, same address. "American Enterprise Institute" and are registered service marks of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

ISSN 0149-9157

CONTENTS

2 **WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT FEELING GOOD?**
An interview with Robert Bellah and Walter Berns
A revived American spirit may have a darker side. Dr. Bellah, a noted sociologist, sees a virulent form of individualism fueling our society. AEI's Dr. Berns questions both the diagnosis and the prescribed cure in Bellah's new book, Habits of the Heart.

6 **FEELING BETTER: MEASURING THE NATION'S CONFIDENCE**
by Seymour Martin Lipset
Confidence in American institutions is turning up again. Public Opinion's *co-editor assesses the change and Ronald Reagan's role in it.*

10 **IF YOU'RE UNHAPPY, THIS MUST BE BELGIUM: WELL-BEING AROUND THE WORLD**
by Ronald Inglehart and Jacques-René Rabier
Can it be true that one nation is significantly happier and more satisfied than another? Apparently so. A cross-national analysis of good and bad feelings.

16 **PRESIDENTIAL LIKEABILITY: IS NICENESS ENOUGH?**
by Ervin Duggan
Ronald Reagan is the most likeable president in recent memory, and some seem to resent him for it. A prominent Democrat looks at the power of charm. Can it offset Reagan's rocky second term start?

19 **FEELING BAD ABOUT DOING GOOD: THE GREAT SOCIETY CONCLAVE**
by Robert Shogan
They set out to do wonderful things, and not all worked out well. A reporter's analysis of the Great Society architects' self-examination.

21 **OPINION ROUNDUP**
SOCIAL SECURITY, ABORTION ATTITUDES, PROTECTIONISM, IDEOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION

41 **THE POLITICS OF PROTECTIONISM**
by Kevin Phillips
Will protectionism be a potent political issue in 1986?

48 **RENDERING WHAT'S DUE: VIEWS ON INCOME EQUALITY**
by Sidney Verba and Gary R. Orren
How much does, and how much should, an elevator operator make? What about a CEO? A study of elites—from feminists to business executives—and their estimates of salaries, real and ideal.

53 **BETWEEN PRO-LIFE AND PRO-CHOICE**
by Victoria A. Sackett
A careful examination of the data on abortion finds both supporters and opponents of the 1973 Supreme Court decisions out of step with public opinion.

by Seymour Martin Lipset

Feeling Better: Measuring the Nation's Confidence

In 1982, William Schneider and I completed a book dealing with the feelings of Americans toward their major institutions, which we entitled *The Confidence Gap*.[1] The book, based on the reports of a myriad of public opinion polls, documented *ad infinitum* the loss of faith in the leadership and operation of those institutions. In the three years that have passed, the United States has undergone a variety of experiences that have affected Americans' perceptions of the way their country works. It seems appropriate to reexamine the earlier findings in the context of the upbeat mood that characterizes the nation at the start of Ronald Reagan's second term.

One president, Jimmy Carter, was so depressed by the decline in trust that in mid-summer 1979, he lectured the nation about the existence of a "fundamental threat to American democracy. . . [a] crisis of confidence . . . that strikes at the very heart and soul and spirit of our national will." The president noted "a growing disrespect for government and for churches and for schools, the news media and other institutions. . . ." He said that the "gap between our citizens and our government has never been so wide. . . ."[2] In a follow-up speech, Carter went on to blame the energy crisis on "a loss of confidence that divides us and threatens us and which for years, too many years, has prevented presidents and the Congress and a great nation from acting courageously to meet this energy challenge."[3]

Carter was, of course, correct that the American people, as of 1979, lacked confidence in their leaders and institutions. Pollsters, the temperature takers of the American mood, had charted a sharp decline in trust from the mid-sixties to the early seventies. Reflecting the tensions that had arisen in tandem with the growth of protest movements during the Vietnam War, trust in government, business, the professions, and other institutions had plummeted. There was literally an explosion of antiestablishment feeling from 1965 on.

The confidence gap, which so worried Jimmy Carter, had developed years before he took office, and may in fact have been partially responsible for his election. The evidence from the polls indicates that the biggest part of the drop-off by far occurred between 1965 and 1972. What upset many Americans during those years was the prolonged lost war in Vietnam and the turmoil that accompanied the massive protest waves associated with opposition to the war, increased racial tension, and the assorted social movements of the time. Challenges to traditional values disturbed people as well: changes in the position of women, blacks, homosexuals, and youth and the rise of the counterculture with its less inhibited sex practices, use of drugs, and freer dress styles. The end of the war was followed by the Watergate affair, one clearly not designed to increase public confidence.

Once this period ended, Americans sought to regain their trust in national institutions. Yet as the evidence we present in our book indicates, every improvement was halted and reversed by bad economic news—increased rates of inflation and/or unemployment. A troubled economy affects people's feelings about their leaders and institutions. These attitudes also affect electoral outcomes. Governments, whether of the left or right, tend to be reelected if the "misery index," the sum of the inflation and unemployment rates, is low or visibly improving, and to be defeated when it is high.[4] Hence the malaise that emerged in reaction to the bad news of the sixties and early seventies continued for another full decade into the recession of the early Reagan years.

---

[1] S. M. Lipset and William Schneider, *The Confidence Gap: Business, Labor and Goverment in the Public Mind* (New York: The Free Press, 1983).

[2] "Transcript of President's Address to Country on Energy Problems," *The New York Times*, July 16, 1979, p. 10.

[3] "Transcript of President's Address to the National Association of Counties in Kansas City," *The New York Times*, July 17, 1979, p. A-14.

Yet it is important to recognize that the period of gloom and doom did not lead most Americans to feel negative or pessimistic about their personal life situations or about the country, as distinct from the operation of its major institutions. All through the malaise, the overwhelming majority of those polled told interviewers that things were going well with them personally and that the United States was the greatest country in the world, that its *system* of government was superior to all others. Hence, there clearly was no crisis of legitimacy, nor did many Americans find it necessary to support radical movements, whether of the left or right. They felt the country was going in the wrong direction, that its leaders, including the heads of private institutions, had somehow become ineffective, but this sense did not lead them to despair of the country or its basic social system.

Power and Greed

The polls on confidence also teach us a great deal about what Americans value in their leaders and what bothers them about particular institutions, or, rather, help to validate some of our traditional assumptions. Although changes in levels of trust in different institutions parallel one another—when trust in big business moves up, faith in labor unions also improves—the degree of confidence in each varies a great deal. Those that rank at the top are medicine, science, higher education, religion, and the military. Conversely, big business, Congress, labor unions, and lawyers are much less esteemed.

If we compare the ranking of the assorted institutions pollsters have inquired about, two factors stand out as sources of differentiation—power and altruism. Institutions that are perceived as powerful—big government, big business, labor unions—are viewed negatively. Less potent ones, such as small business and local unions (as distinct from national ones), are seen more positively. And we find, too, that the more highly regarded groups—educators, scientists, religious leaders, and physicians—are largely those that may be seen as high in altruism, as seeking to serve the community rather than maximizing their income or power. Big business executives, union officials, lawyers, and politicians are more likely to be regarded "as in it for themselves."

Still, even though Americans value what they perceive to be altruistic behavior, they do not oppose competition, or the notion that people or institutions seek to improve their material situation. Competition, small business, and free enterprise tend to be positive terms. What seems to differentiate them from big business or major corporations, which are much less well thought of, is the element of power or monopoly. The public sees the combination of self-interest and power as bad, as possibly undermining American democracy. They also of course fear the mix in the context of state power. Government is necessary to provide assorted services and to countervail or control the unbridled self-interested power of big business and big labor. But big government itself is dangerous.

Hence, Americans tend to be suspicious of those at the summits and to approve of the historic system of checks and balances that pits different organs of government against each other. In *The Confidence Gap*, we report a 1980 Civic Service survey in which, by 51-36 percent, respondents said they prefer a situation in which no one party controls the presidency and both houses of Congress.[5] Since this poll was taken during the administration of an unpopular president, Jimmy Carter, it could be argued that those responding were seeking to restrain his power, and that they would favor an effective administration under a president they admired. But in October 1984, as Ronald Reagan was moving to an overwhelming landslide and stood high in approval ratings, the majority of a Harris poll sample said, by 54-39 percent, that they would not like to see Reagan and his party control both houses of Congress, that it would be better for the country if at least one of them were held by the opposition party so that the power of the reelected president would be restrained.[6]

Things Are Looking Up

Still, the last two and a half years of the Reagan administration have been characterized by a sharp upswing in the indicators that are used to measure the confidence, trust, and faith Americans have in their leaders and institutions. The cynicism about politics that so marked the Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, and early Reagan years seems almost like a bad memory. Magazine after magazine, newspaper and TV stories emphasize a rebirth of patriotism, of belief in the nation. "America is back" proclaims Ronald Reagan. As historian Alan Brinkley sums up the situation:

> That there had indeed been a change in America's mood over the last few years is hardly open to question. The jubilation over the invasion of Grenada in 1983, the exultation with which Americans celebrated the success of their undermatched athletes at the 1984 Olympics, the extraordinary patriotic demonstrations that accompanied the journey of the Olympic torch across the country, the revival of overt nationalism in popular films and television programs, the opinion polls that report a striking rise in optimism about the future (when only four years ago most Americans claimed to expect both personal and national decline): all

---

[4] S. M. Lipset, "No Room For The Ins," *Public Opinion*, 5 (October/November 1982), pp. 41-43.

[5] Lipset and Schneider, *The Confidence Gap*, p. 380.

[6] Louis Harris, "Reagan Wins Reelection, Loses Bid for Republican Congress," *The Harris Survey*, November 8, 1984, p. 1.

Table 1

CONFIDENCE IN LEADERS OF TEN INSTITUTIONS 1966-84

Question: "As far as the *people running* various institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?" (Emphasis added by NORC.)

Period	Date	Survey Organization	Percentage with "A Great Deal of Confidence" in Leaders of . . .										
			Med.	Educ.	Mil.	Org. Relig.	Supreme Court	Maj. Companies	Press	White House (Harris) Exec. Branch (NORC)	Congress	Org. Labor	Average of all
Mid-Sixties	Feb. 1966	Harris	72	61	62	41	50	55	29	41	42	22	48
	Jan. 1967a	Harris	60	56	56	40	40	47	26	37	41	20	42
	AVERAGE		66	59	59	41	45	51	28	39	42	21	45
Early Seventies	Aug. 1971	Harris	61	37	27	27	23	27	18	23	19	14	28
	Oct. 1972a	Harris	48	33	35	29	28	27	18	27	21	15	28
	Mar. 1973	NORC	54	37	32	35	32	29	23	29	24	16	31
	AVERAGE		54	36	32	30	28	28	20	26	21	15	29
Watergate	Sep. 1973	Harris	58	44	40	36	33	30	30	19	30	20	34
	Dec. 1973	Harris	60	46	—	23	—	28	28	13	17	16	31
	Mar. 1974	NORC	60	49	40	44	33	31	26	14	17	16	33
	AVERAGE		59	46	40	36	33	30	28	15	21	18	33
Recession	Aug. 1974	Harris	49	39	34	32	40	22	25	28	18	17	30
	Sep. 1974	Harris	48	39	31	32	35	16	26	18	16	18	28
	Mar. 1975	NORC	50	31	35	24	31	19	24	13	13	10	25
	Apr. 1975	Harris	43	36	24	32	29	20	26	13	14	14	25
	Aug. 1975	Harris	54	37	30	36	28	20	26	16	12	18	28
	Mar. 1976	Harris	—	—	36	—	32	22	21	18	18	—	28
	Mar. 1976	NORC	54	38	39	31	35	22	28	14	14	12	29
	Jan. 1977	Harris	42	37	28	29	29	20	18	23	16	14	26
	AVERAGE		49	37	32	31	32	20	24	18	15	15	27
Early Carter	Mar. 1977	NORC	52	41	36	40	36	27	25	28	19	15	32
	Nov. 1977	Harris	55	41	31	34	31	23	19	23	15	15	29
	AVERAGE		54	41	34	37	34	25	22	26	17	15	30
Carter "Malaise"	Mar. 1978	NORC	46	28	30	31	28	22	20	13	13	11	24
	Aug. 1978	Harris	42	41	29	34	29	22	23	14	10	15	26
	Feb. 1979	Harris	30	33	29	20	28	18	28	17	18	10	23
	Mar. 1980	NORC	52	30	28	35	25	27	22	12	9	15	26
	Nov. 1980	Harris	34	36	28	22	27	16	19	17	18	14	23
	AVERAGE		41	34	29	28	27	21	22	15	14	13	24
Reagan Recession	Sep. 1981	Harris	37	34	28	22	29	16	18	24	16	12	23
	Mar. 1982	NORC	45	33	31	32	31	23	18	19	13	12	26
	Nov. 1982	Harris	32	30	31	20	25	18	14	20	13	8	21
	Mar. 1983	NORC	52	29	29	28	27	24	13	13	10	8	23
	AVERAGE		43	32	30	26	28	20	15	19	13	10	23
Reagan "Upbeat"	Nov. 1983	Harris	35	36	35	22	33	18	19	23	20	10	25
	Mar. 1984	NORC	52	29	37	32	35	32	17	19	13	9	28
	Nov. 1984	Harris	43	40	45	24	35	19	18	42	28	12	31
	AVERAGE		43	35	39	26	34	23	18	28	20	10	28
	TOTAL AVERAGE		49	38	34	31	32	25	22	21	18	14	29

a Electoral participants only.

Source: 30 Harris and NORC surveys.

> suggest that "America's Upbeat Mood" . . . is not as some have charged, a media creation, but a significant change in public perception.[7]

The opinion surveys, as Brinkley notes, put numbers on the change. Gallup reports as of January 1985: "Fifty-two percent of Americans currently express satisfaction with 'the way things are going in the nation' [40 percent are dissatisfied], three times the 17 percent who did so four years ago—and higher than at any time since the measurement was started in 1979."[8] And the CBS News/*New York Times* polling unit reports similar results. In polls that asked respondents to "rate the way things are going in the United States" on a scale from one, the worst possible situation, to ten, the best, the survey organization found that in January 1985, 59 percent placed themselves in one of the five positive places (six to ten) as compared to 37 percent in June 1981.

If we turn, however, to look at two decades of responses to the confidence in institutions questions presented in table 1, the actual story is more complex than answers to questions about the general mood suggest. The findings therein are taken from Harris and NORC polls, which put a similar query about the leadership of the same ten institutions to thirty national samples between February 1966 and November 1984.[9] They are most frequently cited because their results permit an analysis of changes over a longer period than others. The percentages generally compared are those expressing "a great deal of confidence," since the alternatives offered are negative—"only some confidence"—and "hardly any confidence at all."

The data clearly indicate that the national confidence in the leaders of major institutions, which had fallen fairly dramatically during the Carter "malaise" years, 1978-1980, actually reached its lowest point under Ronald Reagan in a Harris survey taken in November 1982. The continued decline during the early Reagan years reflected the worsening economy and the sharp upswing in the unemployment rate. This result reinforces the statistical analysis in *The Confidence Gap*. Schneider and I found that the confidence level varied in tandem with the state of the economy. We did this by correlating variations in the average level of confidence in institutional leadership with changes in the rates of unemployment and inflation for twenty-three surveys taken between 1966 and 1980 by Harris and NORC.

Overall, the results indicate that much of the decline in institutional confidence can be attributed to adverse economic conditions. Unemployment alone accounts for 48 percent of the variances; inflation adds an additional 10 percent. Every one percent increase in unemployment, with no change in inflation, tends to lower the general confidence level by 2.8 percent. Every one percent increase in inflation, with no change in unemployment, tends to lower the confidence level by 0.6 percent. Each factor—unemployment and inflation—has an effect independent of the other.[10]

Clearly, these factors should work in the opposite direction as well. Economic improvement should increase faith in institutions. And, of course, it does. The decline in the unemployment rate, from 11 percent at the end of 1982 to 7 percent in mid-year 1984, while the inflation rate stabilized around the 4 to 5 percent level, was accompanied by the largest increase in confidence in any two-year period since the polls began to query Americans on the subject. The average level of great trust for the ten institutions reported on in table 1 moved up from 21 percent in a Harris survey taken in November 1982 to 31 percent in one conducted by the same organization in November 1984.

Similar results concerning the direction of changes in the level of faith in American institutions have been reported by the Gallup poll. Gallup's results for 1984, while above those for the immediately preceding years, are still below those reported for the 1970s, and like the Harris and NORC findings, suggest that the confidence gap, while reduced in magnitude, still exists. Unfortunately, comparability with the other survey organizations is limited, since Gallup did not begin dealing with the subject until 1973, worded his questions differently from the others, and has not consistently dealt with the same set of institutions. The Gallup poll has asked respondents to report their confidence in the institutions themselves, rather than the people running them, and offers interviewees four, rather than three, options: "a great deal," "quite a lot," "some," or "very little." By giving respondents two positive choices rather than the one ("a great deal") offered by Harris and NORC, Gallup has always reported a higher percentage level of confidence than the other two. In the eight confidence surveys Gallup has conducted from 1975 to 1984, he has included the same seven institutions: the church, the public schools, the U.S. Supreme Court, Congress, the military, organized labor, and big business.[11] On different occasions, however, he has inquired about a number of others, including, since 1979, newspapers, the banks, and television.

The level of positive evaluations for the seven in-

(Continued on page 56)

---

[7] Alan Brinkley, "America is Back," *London Review of Books*, November 1-14, 1984. p. 6.

[8] George Gallup, Jr., "Public Mood Far More Upbeat Today Than When Reagan Began First Term," *The Gallup Poll*, January 27, 1985, p. 1.

[9] Unfortunately, the wording describing some of the institutions has occasionally varied. For example, NORC inquires about "the people running the executive branch of the federal government," while Harris asks about "the people running the White House."

[10] Lipset and Schneider, *The Confidence Gap*, pp. 63-64.

[11] Gallup's first confidence poll taken in 1973 did not inquire about the military.

by Ronald Inglehart and Jacques-René Rabier

If You're Unhappy, This Must Be Belgium:

Few research topics seem more worthwhile than the effort to understand what makes human beings happy; but two puzzles face anyone who tries to analyze the subject empirically.

If we wanted to give an exotic name to the first, we might call it the paradox of "minimum intergroup variation." Everybody knows that some groups are much better off than others, and common sense suggests that they must be happier and more satisfied with their lives. But empirical evidence indicates that the differences between the more and less fortunate are astonishingly small. In colloquial terms, this puzzle might be stated: "Why doesn't money buy happiness?"—or, more precisely, "Why does it buy so little?"

The second might be called the puzzle of "large cross-national variation." Happiness and overall life satisfaction vary surprisingly little between groups within a country, but they vary a great deal between different countries. This cross-national variation does not seem to reflect problems of translation from one language to another; even when we use the same words to phrase queries, different nationalities (such as the French and the Walloons) appear to have very different levels of subjective well-being. Furthermore, the differences do not lend themselves to any of the obvious explanations. Rich nations, for example, do not necessarily show higher levels of subjective well-being than relatively poor ones. In concrete terms, we might ask, "Why are the Dutch so much happier than the Germans?"

Adjusting Aspirations

The paradox of small variation among groups has been noted by a number of investigators who have examined data from many countries.[1] As one would expect, the rich are more satisfied with their incomes than the poor, and the highly educated are more satisfied with their education than the less educated. But even those differences are smaller than might be expected, and on satisfaction with life as a whole, the differences are very modest indeed.

Why is this? A possible explanation is that satisfaction with any given aspect of life reflects the gap between *aspiration level* and *perceived situation;* but aspiration levels gradually adjust to circumstances.[2]

If such adjustments are part of human nature, then one would not normally find large differences in subjective well-being between social groups, *provided* these groups had reasonably stable membership. For in the long run, the aspiration levels of stable groups have time to adapt to their external circumstances. Relatively high or low levels of subjective well-being would occur only when recent changes had raised or lowered the relative position of a given group.

The empirical evidence fits the aspiration-adjustment model very neatly. But one variable does *not* fit: nationality, a stable attribute, displays a great deal of intergroup variation in levels of well-being. Indeed, both happiness and life satisfaction vary so *much* cross-nationally that it seems to undermine the credibility of the entire aspiration-adjustment model.

Nationality is by far our strongest predictor of both life satisfaction and happiness. It accounts for at least twice as much variation as do recent changes in financial situation, and several times more than any other factor. Further-

Well-Being Around the World

more, the differences are consistent: Those nationalities that rank high on life satisfaction also rank high on happiness; those that rank lowest on satisfaction also rank lowest on happiness. Finally, these differences have been quite stable over time.

Does "Zufrieden" Equal "Satisfait"?

Summing up a great deal of evidence from more than 170,000 Eurobarometer interviews, it seems clear that there are large and rather stable cross-national differences in reported levels of subjective well-being.[3] This finding seems to conflict seriously with the aspiration-adjustment interpretation. If the cross-national differences were small, they would be consistent with the pattern of minimal intergroup variation that has been observed consistently, and in many nations. Or if the differences were transient, we might attribute them to short-term factors that had distinctive effects on the respective nations. But since the cross-national differences observed from 1973 to 1984 are not only large but also rather stable, the contradiction must be explained some other way.

One way out of this dilemma would be to write off the cross-national differences as a result of poor translation, or to argue that the word for satisfaction has quite different connotations in other languages. "Satisfait" and "zufrieden" are not equivalent to "satisfied." This explanation is extremely tempting, but, unfortunately, it does not seem tenable.

There are a number of reasons why this seemingly plausible explanation does not stand up under closer inspection. One is illustrated by the case of Switzerland. The Swiss have three different national languages, which coincide with three of the languages used in other nations included in these surveys. Using Swiss data that incorporate satisfaction items similar to ours, we can compare Switzerland to other nations, holding language constant. The German-speaking Swiss, the French-speaking Swiss, and the Italian-speaking Swiss *all* express relatively high levels of satisfaction with their lives as a whole. The Swiss not only rank far above the Germans, French, and Italians with whom they share a language, but they also rank above *all* of the other nationalities except the Danes and Swedes, with whom they are essentially on a par. This replicates earlier findings that the Swiss rank very high on both satisfaction and happiness, in comparison with other Western publics. The Swiss results devastate the attempt to explain differences between nations as artifacts of language.

The Swiss case alone is so damaging to the problems-of-translation hypothesis that further evidence seems superfluous, but there is a good deal of it that's interesting. The Belgian data provide another example. Most Belgians speak either French or a variant of Dutch. But throughout the period 1973-1979, even the French-speaking Belgians ranked far above the French and only slightly below the Dutch in both happiness and satisfaction. Here again, nationality seems to be a much more powerful predictor of subjective well-being than language. In addition, we have the Dutch-German contrast. The two languages are closely related, and the Dutch words for both "satisfied" and "happy" are cognates of their German counterparts. But the Dutch consistently rank far above the Germans in both life satisfaction and happiness.

Finally, we know that those nationalities that rank high on life satisfaction also have a strong and consistent tendency to rank high on happiness. In order to attribute the cross-national differences to linguistic artifacts, one would be forced to assume that virtually everyone who has done research on the subject has somehow stumbled onto the same type of noncomparable translation not only for satisfaction, but also for happiness. Though unable to find equivalent words for the *same* concept, they managed to find words for *another* concept that distorted the results in exactly the same direction, and to almost exactly the same degree, in country after country. To achieve this by accident would require a miracle of serendipity.

Geography as Destiny?

But exactly what *is* it that underlies these large and rather stable cross-national differences? Can it be true that the Italians, French, Germans, and Greeks really *are* a great deal less happy and more dissatisfied with their lives than the Danes, Swiss, Dutch, and Irish? Could fate be so unkind as to doom entire nationalities to unhappiness, simply because they happened to be born in the wrong place? The idea is difficult to accept—not only because it seems unfair, but also because it implies that there are profound differences in how the human organism functions from one nation to another. Could it possibly be true that the Italians experience life as burdensome on the whole, while the Swiss, living literally next door, find it enjoyable? The idea is conceivable, but it seems incompatible with a great body of social research findings, which indicate that human beings generally function in similar ways. Moreover, it seems incompatible with some of the most striking findings from other research on this very topic.

We suggest that the cross-national differences have an important cultural component: Though they do not seem to reflect the different languages that were used, they probably do reflect different cultural norms. Quite possibly, these cultures differ in the extent to which it is permissible to express unhappiness and dissatisfaction with one's life. The norm is to describe oneself as at least fairly satisfied, but the strength of this norm seems to vary from nation to nation. In general, it appears to be stronger in Northern Europe than in Southern Europe.

In other words, given societies may have different baselines from which they respond to questions about subjective well-being. If they are feeling especially good at the time of the survey, they may give a response that is well above their cultural mean; if they are feeling especially bad, their response may fall far below this norm. But because most members of a given society have the same baseline in mind, satisfaction and happiness levels vary relatively little between large groups *within* a given society, even though they vary a great deal *between* societies.

This interpretation strikes us as plausible, and it seems to reconcile some otherwise highly contradictory findings. But it is only part of the answer, for it immediately raises another question: Why do various Western nations—some of them geographically, culturally, and politically similar to one another—exhibit such different cultural baselines when asked, "How are you feeling?" Does this baseline correspond to a nation's level of economic development? Is it a more or less permanent feature, or does it reflect the effect of recent influences? We can only begin to suggest some answers.

Table 1

SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING IN NINETEEN SOCIETIES, 1974-1983

Satisfaction with One's Life as a Whole (mean score on 11-point scale: 0 = very dissatisfied 10 = very satisfied)				**GNP per capita in 1979**
Denmark	1981	8.21	8.03	$ 8,470
"	1983	7.84		
Sweden	1981		8.02	10,071
Switzerland	1976		7.98	9,439
Norway	1981		7.90	8,762
Netherlands	1974	7.64	7.77	7,057
"	1981	7.71		
"	1983	7.96		
N. Ireland	1981	7.68	7.77	3,560
"	1983	7.85		
Ireland	1981	7.82	7.76	3.533
"	1983	7.70		
Finland	1976	7.56	7.73	5,814
"	1981	7.89		
Luxembourg	1983		7.64	7,754
U.S.A.	1974	7.41	7.57	10,765
"	1981	7.72		
Britain	1974	7.33	7.52	4,972
"	1981	7.67		
"	1983	7.56		
Belgium	1981	7.36	7.33	7,978
"	1983	7.29		
West Germany	1974	6.99	7.23	9,507
"	1981	7.25		
"	1983	7.46		
Austria	1974		7.14	6,311
France	1981	6.66	6.63	8,619
"	1983	6.59		
Spain	1981		6.60	2,830
Italy	1976	6.33	6.58	4,191
"	1981	6.62		
"	1983	6.78		
Japan	1981		6.39	7,244
Greece	1983		5.85	2,881

Happiness (mean score on 4-point scale: 1 = not at all happy 4 = very happy)	
Ireland	3.36
N. Ireland	3.34
Britain	3.33
Netherlands	3.30
Denmark	3.26
U.S.A.	3.26
Belgium	3.25
Sweden	3.24
Norway	3.21
France	3.09
Finland	3.03
Spain	2.98
West Germany	2.96
Japan	2.96
Italy	2.84

Note: The satisfaction scales used in the *Political Action Survey* and in Eurobarometer 19 ranged from zero to ten; while those used in the World Values Survey ranged from one to ten. Consequently the mean scores from the 1981 survey are slightly higher than those from the other two surveys: holding nationality constant, the mean score is 0.11 higher. This difference is smaller than might be expected because, on both scales, about 80 percent of the respondents place themselves at point 5 or higher. But the scores for those countries from which we have 1981 ratings only, are probably slightly inflated.

Source: Satisfaction ratings for 1981 from World Values Survey; satisfaction ratings for 1974-1976 from *Political Action Surveys;* satisfaction ratings for 1983 from Eurobarometer 19. All happiness ratings are from the World Values Survey, with fieldwork carried out by the Gallup affiliates in the respective countries.

First, let us consider the relationship between subjective well-being and economic development. Table 1 shows the mean scores on scales designed to measure overall life satisfaction and the sense of happiness, among the citizenry of nineteen nations. It also shows the gross national product (GNP) per capita for each of these nations in 1979 (a year in which the value of the dollar was not as inflated as it is today.)

Greece is one of the two poorest countries included in our surveys and consistently ranks very low in both life satisfaction and happiness. Spain and Italy are also relatively poor countries, and they too fall among the lowest ranking in subjective well-being. At the other end of the scale, the Danes, Swedes, and Swiss rank high on income, and they consistently rank high on both happiness and overall life satisfaction. So far, the fit between economic level and subjective life satisfaction seems promising.

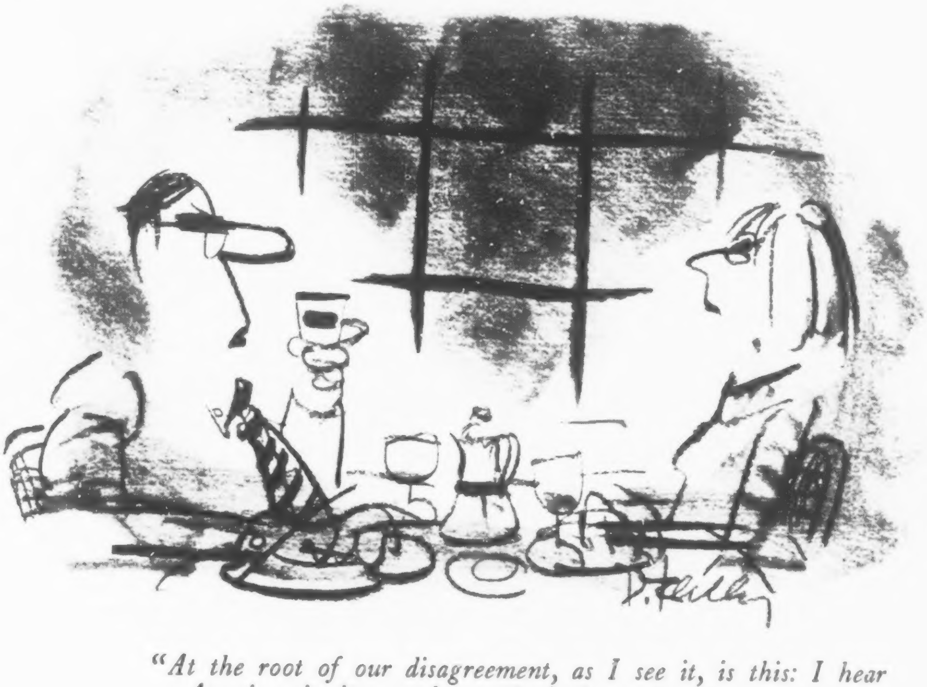
But there are some striking anomalies. The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland both rank low on per capita income—even lower than Italy—but they are among the *highest* ranking societies in subjective well-being. Furthermore, although the Americans have the highest average income, they rank exactly at the median in life satisfaction among the nineteen industralized nations. Similarly, the West Germans, the French, and the Japanese show life satisfaction levels far below their relative income level. The relative rankings for happiness are similar to those for life satisfaction (although we have data for a smaller number of nations). Overall, the more prosperous nationalities tend to be more satisfied and happier, but the correlation is not very strong. David Easterlin reached similar conclusions in 1974, using data from a different set of nations.[1]

Economic development alone, then, cannot explain variations in subjective well-being. We believe that cultural factors are also involved, partly because the cross-national differences tend to be so long-lasting. William Buchanan and Hadley Cantril found large cross-national differences in overall satisfaction measures,[5] with 1948 cross-national rankings very similar to those shown in our own data from the 1970s and 1980s. The Dutch were the exception; they now rank above the Americans and the British, though they were below them in 1948. A long-term cultural component, then, must account for part of the cross-national variation in subjective well-being.

What's Made the Belgians So Sad?

But culture accounts for only part of it. Short-term variations do occur: Both overall life satisfaction and happiness levels within given societies fluctuate considerably over time. Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate this in connection with overall life satisfaction; Figures 3 and 4 show happiness levels. On the whole, respective nationalities retain their relative positions rather consistently, but it is not an iron law.

Changes in satisfaction and happiness levels among the Belgian public from 1973 to 1984 constitute our most striking illustration of this. From 1973 to 1979, the Belgians consistently ranked second or third in both overall life satisfaction and happiness among the ten European Community populations. In the 1980s, a precipitate decline took place. By 1984, happiness and satisfaction levels in most countries were about where they had been in 1973, but the Belgian level of life satisfaction had fallen drastically, as figures

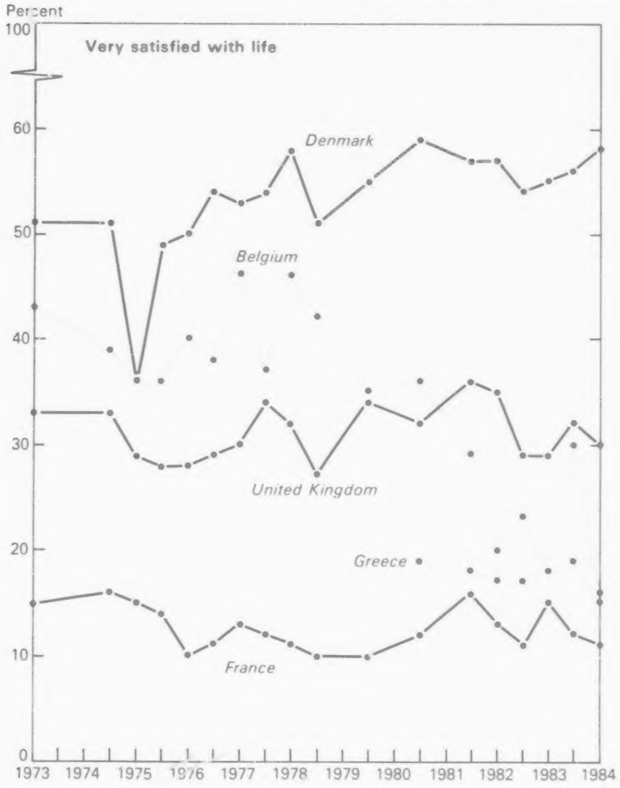


"At the root of our disagreement, as I see it, is this: I hear America singing, and you don't hear America singing."

Drawing by D. Reilly; © 1985, The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

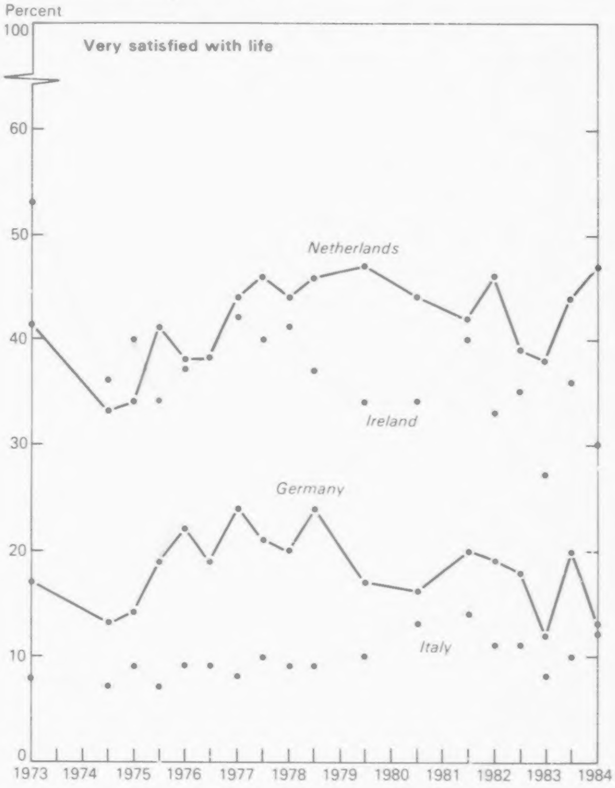
Question: On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the life you lead?

Figure 1



Note: 1973, the United Kingdom = Great Britain only.

Figure 2



1 and 2 demonstrate. From late 1981 through 1984, the Belgians have been one of the *least* satisfied publics, and the downward trend seems to be continuing. During this period the Belgian happiness level also fell from a fairly consistent second place (behind only the Dutch) to sixth place. This was an unusual, tragic, and probably traumatic experience. Though we have questioned whether one can take the size of the cross-national differences at face value, this decline over time holds nationality constant; there is no reason to doubt that it reflects a genuine change. The happiness and overall satisfaction levels of an entire people seem to have declined dramatically.

Throughout the period from 1973 to 1978, about 40 percent of the Belgians felt "very satisfied" with their lives. From 1979 on, this indicator declined, until by October 1984 only 16 percent were "very satisfied"—less than half as many as at the lowest point reached in the 1970s. This phenomenon has passed virtually unnoticed outside Belgium, partly because Belgium is a small country, but also because we have only begun to monitor subjective well-being. We suggest that this was a genuinely important, if poorly understood, event. Unless our indicators are totally erroneous, in its impact on human happiness this phenomenon dwarfed most events that make world headlines.

In part, the decline seems to reflect recent economic changes. Economic conditions were unfavorable throughout the European Community, and unemployment rates were particularly bad. West Europeans had been accustomed to relatively low unemployment rates; even in the recession of the mid-1970s, they rose little above 5 percent. But by 1983, unemployment in the European Community as a whole had risen to more than 10 percent of the work force; in Belgium it was over 15 percent—the highest level the Belgians had experienced since World War II. Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Belgians experienced a sharp decline in subjective well-being. Yet the causes of Belgian malaise are far from clear. The Netherlands and Ireland had unemployment rates that by 1983 had risen even higher than those in Belgium, but although the Dutch and the Irish were suffering from harrowing and unfamiliar conditions, they did not show such sharp declines in subjective well-being as the Belgians did. While the Irish levels of overall satisfaction and happiness did drop some, the Dutch maintained levels that are simply astonishing. In that country, there was no decline in subjective well-being. Part of the explanation for this may lie in the exceptionally high unemployment benefits and the generally high levels of social security available in the Netherlands. In any case, it is clear that under relatively extreme conditions, cross-national differences in subjective well-being *can* be eroded. Distinctive cultural baselines may exist—but they are not immune to the impact of changes in the socioeconomic environment.

The Advantages of Postmaterialism

The modest but consistent link we have observed between subjective well-being and economic development suggests

Question: Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days—would you say you are very happy, fairly happy, or not too happy these days?

Figure 3

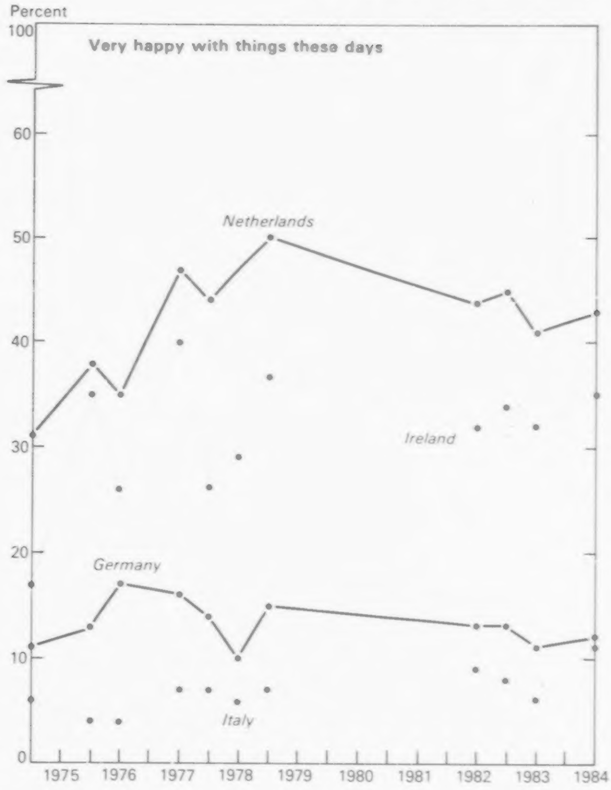
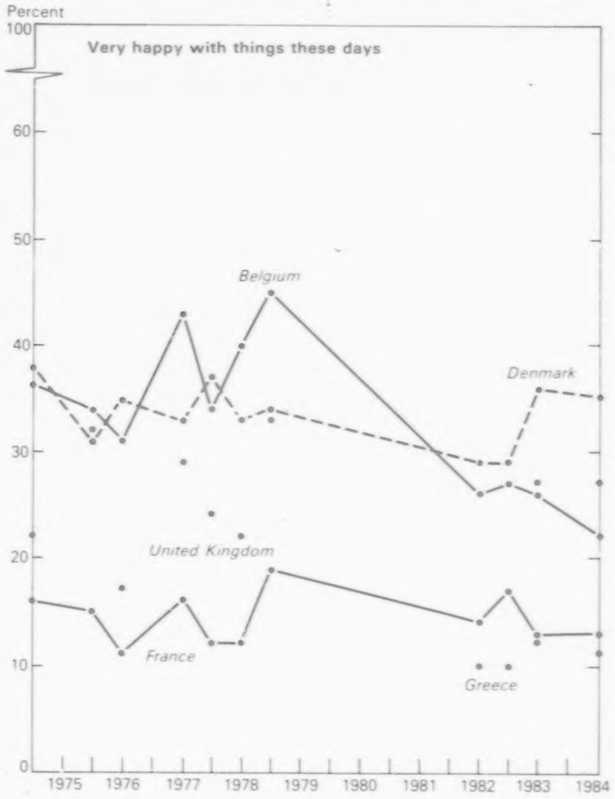


Figure 4



that cultural baselines may gradually shift when a society experiences protracted periods of misery. When a large share of the population expresses negative feelings, the norm that encourages positive expressions of feelings becomes weakened.

Our data indicate that the subjective quality of life as it is experienced by entire nationalities can rise or fall markedly over time. Precisely why and how such phenomena occur is still very poorly understood. Furthermore, cultural change may change the way in which the quality of life is judged. On the individual level, economic factors have much less impact on the happiness and satisfaction levels of Postmaterialists—those whose values emphasize belonging, self-expression, and the quality of life—than on those of Materialists—those who give top priority to physical sustenance and safety.[6] Among the Materialists, for example, the upper income quartile shows substantially higher satisfaction and happiness levels than the lowest income quartile does. Among Postmaterialists, the satisfaction levels of the respective income groups are virtually identical.

This fact may contribute to an explanation of the different patterns observed at the national level. The two countries with the highest proportion of Postmaterialists, among the twenty-seven for which we have data, are the Netherlands and Sweden, both of which are characterized by exceptionally high levels of social welfare expenditures. We hypothesize that a highly developed social welfare system makes economic factors less relevant to personal and political satisfaction in two ways: In the short term, it reduces the impact of economic difficulties on an individual's standard of living, and in the long term, it provides the sense of economic security that is conducive to the development of Postmaterialist orientations.

On the whole, cross-national differences were rather stable from 1973-1984, with a few noteworthy exceptions. The most striking of these was a sharp decline in the Belgians' sense of well-being. It seems, then, that feelings of satisfaction and happiness for *an entire society* can deteriorate dramatically within a few years. Precisely how such phenomena occur is poorly understood, and well worth studying.

NOTES

[1] Frank M. Andrews and Stephen Withey, *Social Indicators of Well-Being* (New York: Plenum Press, 1976); Angus E. Campbell, Philip Converse and Willard Rodgers, *The Quality of American Life* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1976); Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977); Erik Allardt, "Objective and Subjective Social Indicators of Well-Being," in *Comparative Studies in Sociology*, 1978, 1/142-173; Samuel H. Barnes, Barbara G. Farah, and Felix Heunks, "Personal Dissatisfaction," in S. Barnes et al., *Political Action* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, Inc., 1979).

[2] Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers, *The Quality of American Life;* Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution.*

[3] Ronald Inglehart and Jacques-René Rabier, "Aspirations Adjust to Situations—But Why Are the Dutch So Much Happier than the Germans?" in Frank M. Andrews, ed., *Studies in Subjective Well-Being* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Institute for Social Research, 1985).

[4] David Easterlin, "Docs Economic Growth Improve the Human Lot?: Some Empirical Evidence," in P. David and M. Reder, eds., *Nations and Households in Economic Growth* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

[5] William Buchanan and Hadley Cantril, *How Nations See Each Other* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1953).

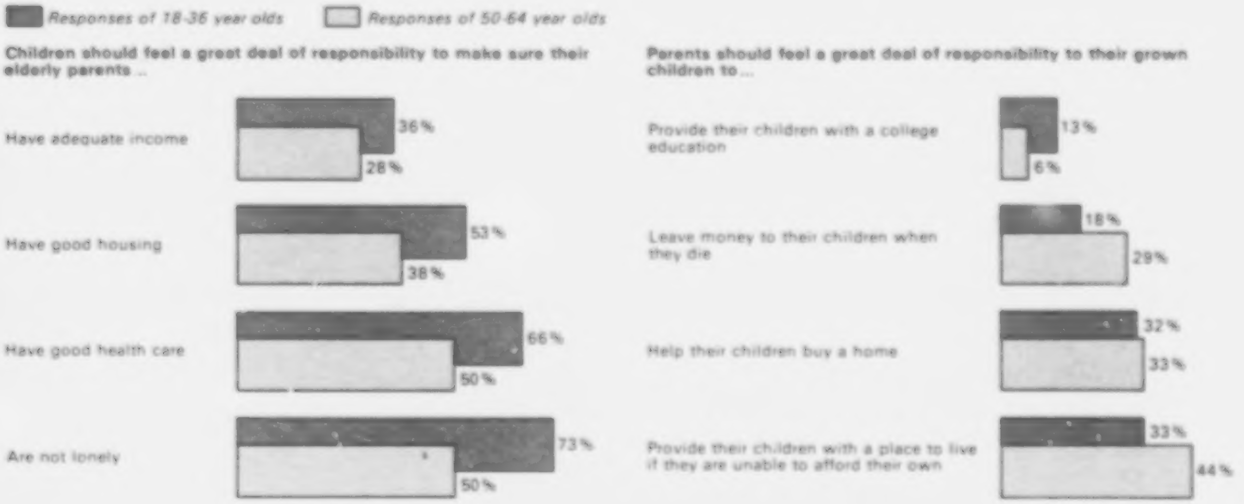
[6] Inglehart and Rabier, "Aspirations Adjust to Situations."

SOCIAL SECURITY: YOUNG AND OLD VIEW THE SYSTEM'S PROSPECTS

AGE-OLD QUESTIONS

Question: There are different views today about the responsibilities of children to their elderly parents. For each of the following, please tell me whether you think children should feel a great deal of responsibility toward their elderly parents, some responsibility, a little responsibility, or no responsibility?

Question: People also have different views about the responsibilities parents have to their children after the children are grown. For each of the following, please tell me whether you think parents should feel a great deal of responsibility, some responsibility, a little responsibility, or no responsibility?

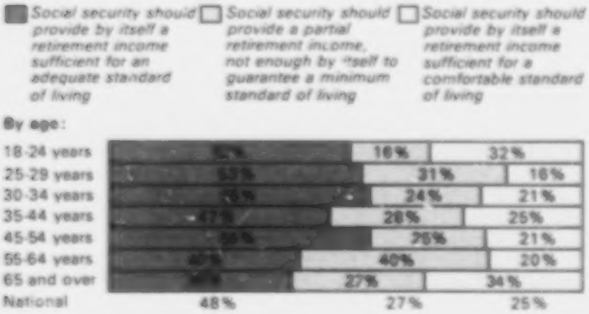


Note: Sample size = 997.

Source: Survey by National Research Incorporated for The American Council of Life Insurance, November 2-18, 1984.

WHAT SHOULD SOCIAL SECURITY DO?

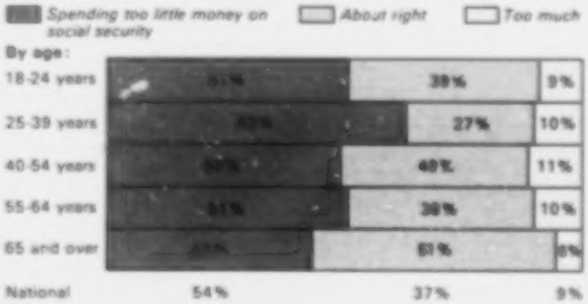
Question: In addition to social security, people may provide for their retirement income through various sources—for example, pension plans, savings, investments, and life insurance. How much financial support do you think social security alone should provide for retirees? (HAND CARD)



Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the American Council of Life Insurance, September 1984.

HOW MUCH SHOULD WE SPEND?

Question: We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. . . . Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on social security?

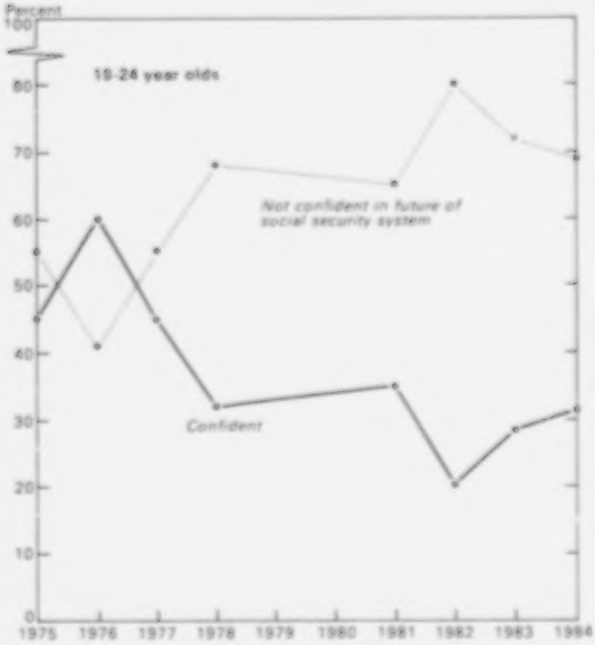


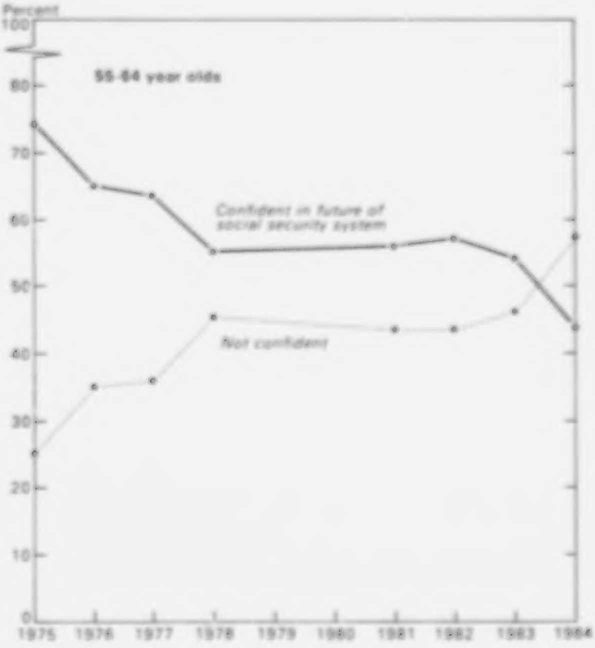
Note: Asked of two-thirds of the sample = 989.

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Survey, 1984.

CONFIDENCE IN SYSTEM'S FUTURE

Question: How confident are you, yourself, in the future of the social security system?



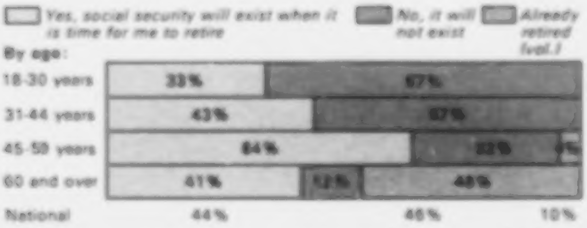


	National		18-24 years		25-29 years		30-34 years		35-44 years		45-54 years		55-64 years		65 and over	
	Conf.	Non-conf.	Conf.	Non-conf.	Conf.	Non-conf.	Conf.	Non-conf.	Conf.	Non-conf.	Conf.	Non-conf.	Conf.	Non-conf.	Conf.	Non-conf.
1975	63%	37%	45%	55%	59%	41%	51%	49%	62%	38%	66%	34%	74%	25%	82%	18%
1976	58	43	60	41	46	54	41	60	51	50	55	45	65	35	78	22
1977	50	50	45	55	35	64	37	62	45	54	49	51	64	36	75	25
1978	39	60	32	68	27	73	35	65	24	76	41	60	55	45	62	37
1981	42	57	35	65	24	75	26	75	34	66	40	59	56	43	73	26
1982	32	67	20	80	15	85	15	84	18	82	31	70	57	43	66	34
1983	35	66	28	72	21	79	20	80	25	75	30	69	54	46	67	33
1984	68	32	31	69	19	81	30	70	21	79	26	74	43	57	48	51

Note: Confident = "Very confident" + "Somewhat confident"; Non-confident = "Not too confident" + "Not at all confident."

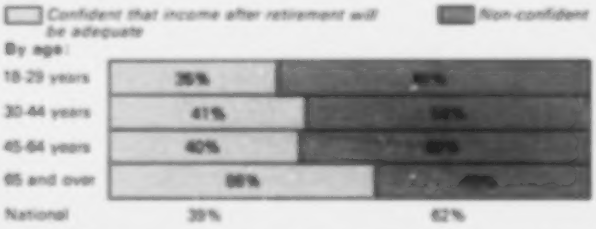
Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the American Council of Life Insurance, latest that of September 1984.

Question: There has been a lot of discussion about the financial condition of the social security system. Do you think social security will exist or not when it is time for you or your spouse to retire?



Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 11-16, 1985.

Question: How confident are you that your income after your retirement will be enough for you to live on adequately—very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident? (Asked of respondents who were not retired)



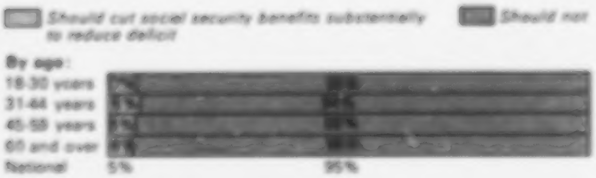
Note: Confident = "Very confident" + "Somewhat confident"; Non confident = "Not too confident" + "Not at all confident."

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, April 7-11, 1983.

OPINION ROUNDUP

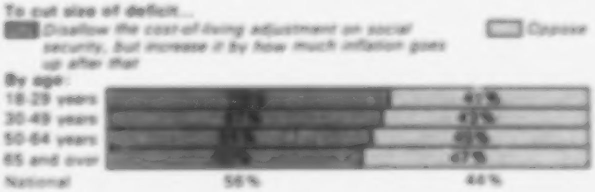
GENERATIONAL SKIRMISHES, BUT NO WARFARE

Question: Do you think the government should cut social security benefits substantially to reduce the budget deficit, or not?



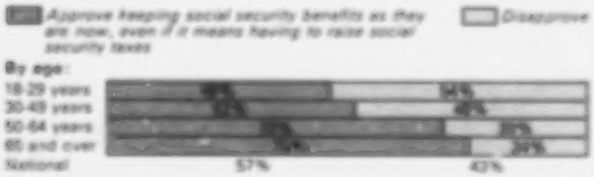
Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 11-16, 1985.

Question: Now let's look at the spending side. To cut the size of the federal budget deficit, would you favor or oppose . . . Disallowing the cost-of-living adjustment on social security for one year, but increasing it by how much inflation goes up after that?



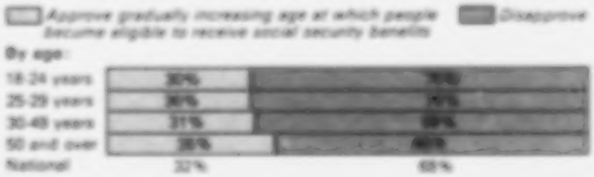
Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for Sentry Insurance, February 1-12, 1985.

Question: A number of recommendations have been made to help the social security system. Tell me if you approve or disapprove of each of the following recommendations. . . . Keep social security benefits as they are now, even if it means having to raise social security taxes.



Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, October 29-November 1, 1982.

Question: As I read off some of the ways social security could help pay its way, please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of each one. . . . Gradually increase the age at which people become eligible to receive social security benefits.



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, November 19-22, 1982.

STILL THE DEMOCRATS' ISSUE

Question: I'm going to mention a few of the problems and issues facing the country. Regardless of how you personally feel about the two parties, I'd like you to tell me which one, the Republican party or the Democratic party, would do a better job of handling each particular problem or issue. . . . Protecting the social security system. (1981)

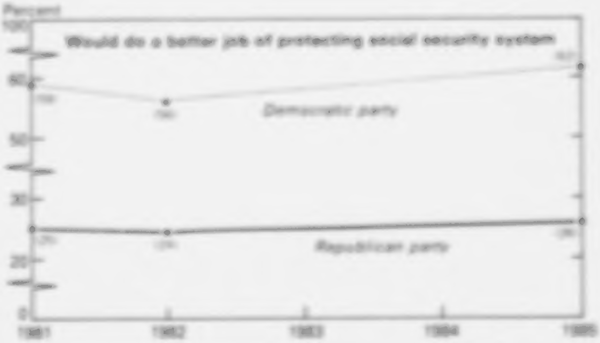
Question: I am going to mention a few of the problems facing the country. Regardless of how you personally feel about the two parties, I'd like you to tell me which party, the Republicans or the Democrats, would do a better job of handling each particular issue. . . . Protecting the social security system. (1985)

Would do a better job of protecting social security system:

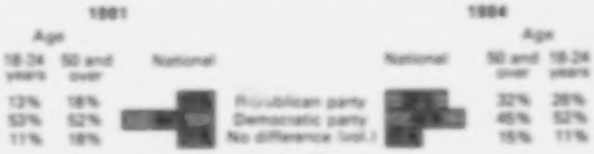
	1981		1982		1985	
	Dem. Party	Rep. Party	Dem. Congress	Rep. Congress	Dem. Party	Rep. Party
By age:						
18-30 years	63%	23%	49%	30%	68%	23%
31-44 years	58	25	61	21	59	27
45-60 years	59	24	63	20	59	26
61 and over	54	28	54	25	57	30
National	59	25	56	24	62	26

Note: Not all response categories shown. In 1982, question asked about "which group in Congress, the Democrats or the Republicans, would do better coping with that issue. . . ."

Source: Surveys by ABC News/*Washington Post*, latest that of January 11-16, 1985.



Question: As you feel today, which political party—the Republican or the Democratic—do you think serves the interests of the following groups the best? . . . Retired people.



Note: "No opinion" not shown.

Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of November 30-December 3, 1984.

OPINION ROUNDUP

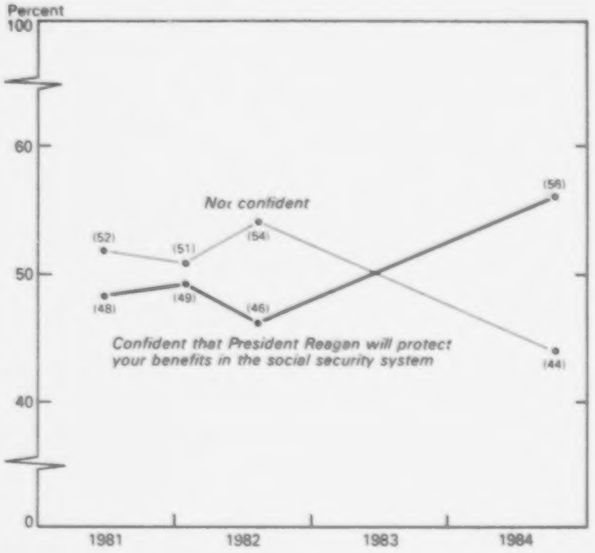
REVIEWING REAGAN'S PERFORMANCE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

Question: How much confidence do you have that President Reagan will protect your benefits in the social security system? Are you very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident, or don't you have any confidence at all that President Roagan will protect your benefits in the social security system?

By age:	**Confident**	**Not confident**
1981		
18-29	39%	61%
65 and over	62	38
January 1982		
18-29	36	64
65 and over	69	31
August 1982		
18-29	40	60
65 and over	65	35
October 1984		
18-29	55	4[illegible]
65 and over	63	38

Note: Confident = "Very confident" and "Somewhat confident"; Not confident = "Not very confident" and "No confidence at all." October 4-15, 1984 survey of registered voters. Total sample for that survey was 4,831.

Source: Surveys by the *Los Angeles Times*, latest that of October 4-15, 1984.



VOTING PATTERNS

Vote in presidential races

	Gallup 1968	**Gallup 1972**	**CBS/*NYT* exit 1976**	**CBS/*NYT* exit 1980**	**CBS/*NYT* exit 1984**
National	43%/43%/14%	38%/61%	50%/48%	41%/51%/8%	41%/59%
60 years and over	43%/48%/9%	29%/71%	47%/53%	41%/55%/4%	36%/64%
	Humphrey/Nixon/ Wallace	McGovern/Nixon	Carter/Ford	Carter/Reagan/ Anderson	Mondale/Reagan

The data below show the deviation from the national vote for Republican presidential and congressional candidates by age groups. In 1968, for example, those 60-64 years old were 5 percentage points more Republican than the nation in the presidential vote. Gallup data are used here.

	Presidential					**Congressional**			
	1968	**1972**	**1976**	**1980**	**1984**	**1970**	**1974**	**1978**	**1982**
60-64 years	+5	+2	+6	+1	−8	+9	+7	+5	0
65-69	+1	+5	0	+1	−3	+8	+14	−4	+4
70-74	+1	+12	+15	+5	−9	+10	+4	0	−1
75 and over	+8	+4	+8	+17	+6	+6	+6	+10	−2

Note: Surveys have been combined from two Gallup polls for each year as follows: (for 1968) October 17-22 preelection and November 9-14 postelection; (for 1972) October 13-16 preelection and November 10-13 postelection; (for 1976) October 22-25 preelection and November 12-15 postelection; (for 1980) November 7-10 and November 21-24—both postelection; (for 1984) October 26-29 preelection and November 9-12 postelection. Preelection leaners are included.

Note: Surveys have been combined from two Gallup polls for each year as follows: (for 1970) October 9-14 and October 22-25; (for 1974) October 11-14 and October 18-21; (for 1978) October 13-16 and October 27-30; (for 1982) October 15-18 preelection and November 5-8 postelection).

Source: Surveys by the Gallup organization.

Percent of Voting Age Population 65 Years and Over by State:

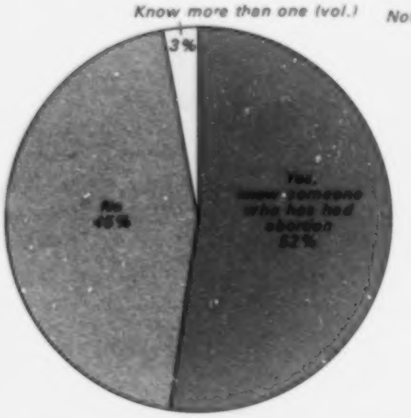
AK3%; CO12%; UT12%; HI13%; NV13%; TX13%; WY13%; CA14%; GA14%; LA14%; MD14%; NM14%; SC14%; TN14%; VA14%; WV14%; DE15%; DC15%; NC15%; WA15%; ID16%; IL16%; IN16%; KY16%; MI16%; MT16%; NH16%; OH16%; OK16%; VT16%; AL17%; AZ17%; CT17%; MN17%; MS17%; NJ17%; NY17%; KS18%; ME18%; MA18%; ND18%; OR18%; WI18%; IA19%; MO 19%; NE19%; PA19%; RI19%; AR20%; SD20%; FL23%.

Note: Figures are projections for November 1, 1984, made in March 1984.

Source: Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce.

ABORTION
Putting Attitudes in Context

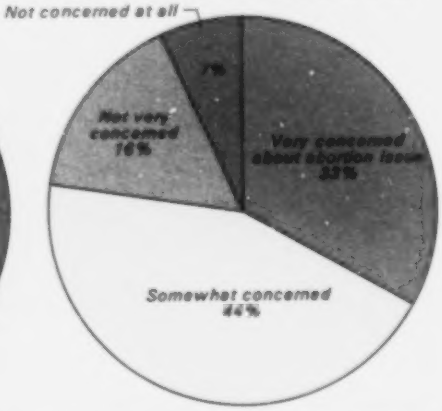
Question: Do you know anyone who has had an abortion?



Note: Sample size = 505.

Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 18-20, 1985.

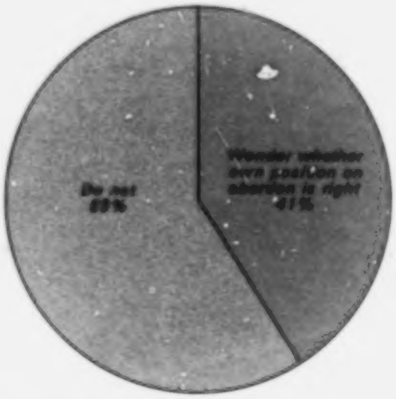
Question: How concerned are you personally about the abortion issue? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not very concerned, or not concerned at all?



Note: Asked of one-third of sample = 481.

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Survey, February-April, 1984.

Question: Do you ever wonder whether your own position on abortion is the right one or not?

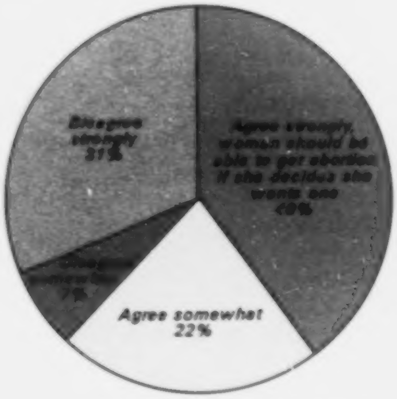


Note: Sample size = 757.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek*, January 3-4, 1985.

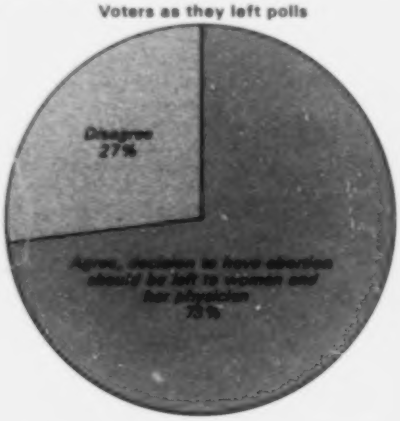
General Support

Question: Do you tend to agree or disagree with this statement: A woman should be able to get an abortion if she decides she wants one?



Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, February 13-15, 1984.

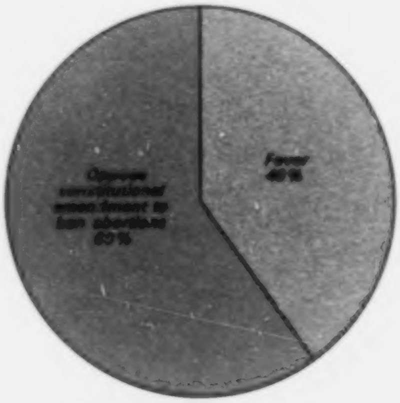
Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The decision to have an abortion should be left to the woman and her physician?



Note: Sample = 11,671 voters as they left polls.

Source: Survey by NBC News, November 6, 1984.

Question: Now I'd like to ask you some questions about the abortion issue. Do you favor or oppose a constitutional amendment to ban abortions?

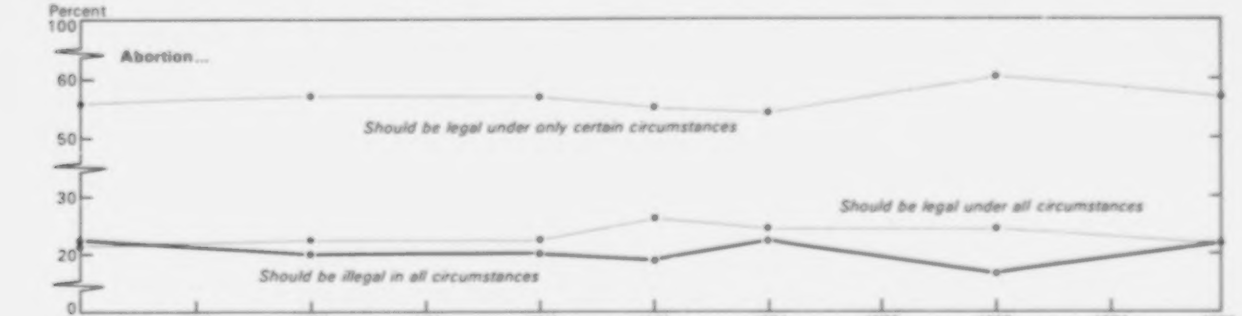


Note: Sample size = 1,254.

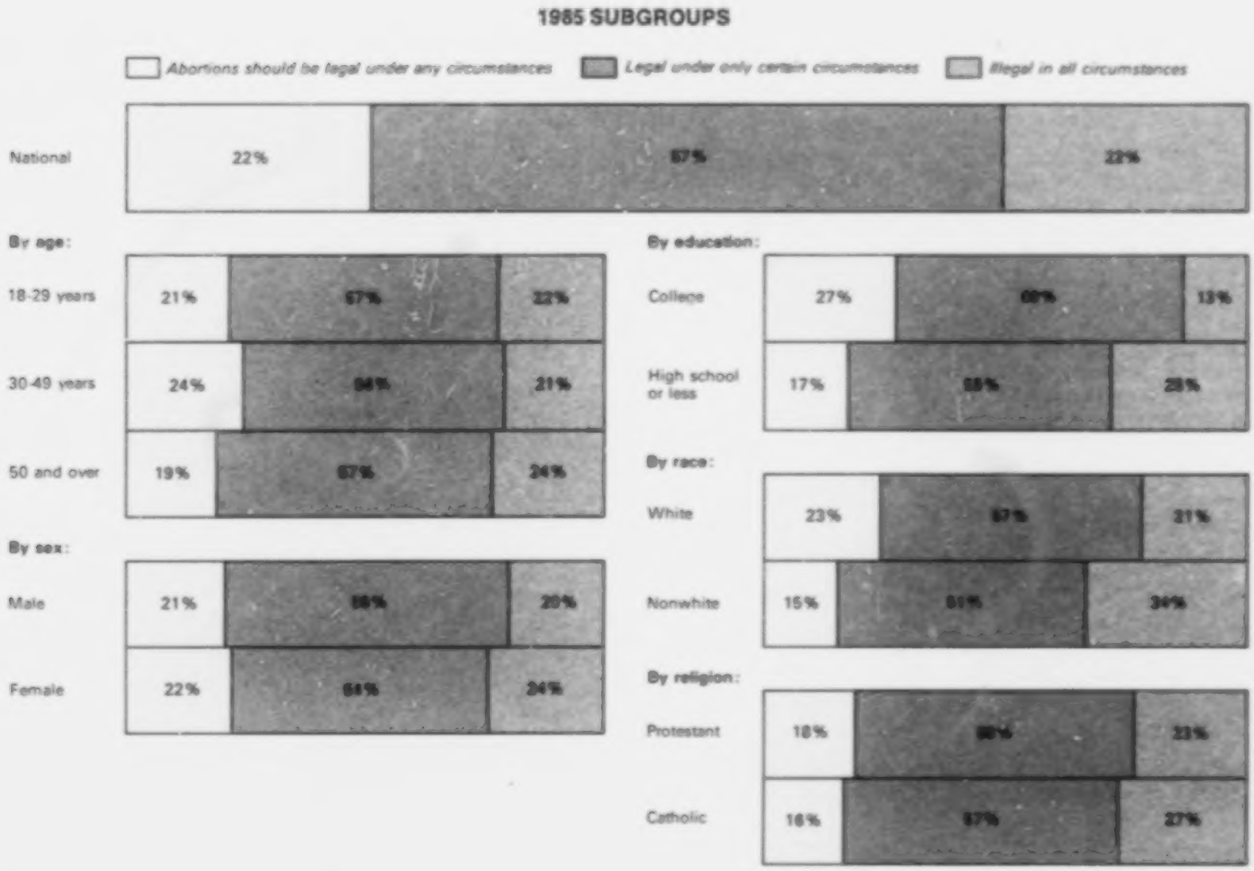
Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, January 24-27, 1985.

The Complicating

Question: Do you think abortions should be legal under all circumstances, only certain circumstances, or illegal in all circumstances?



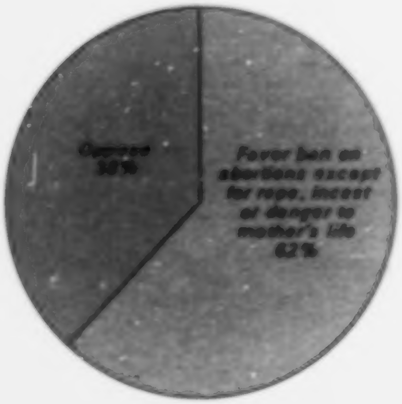
	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Any	22%		23%		23%	26%	24%		24%		22%
Certain	56		57		57	55	54		60		57
Illegal	23		20		20	19	22		16		22



Note: "Non-white" subgroup sample = 99. "Catholic" subgroup sample = 191. All other subgroup samples were larger than 200. 1985 sample size = 757.
Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of June 24-27, 1983; by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek*, January 3-4, 1985.

Circumstances

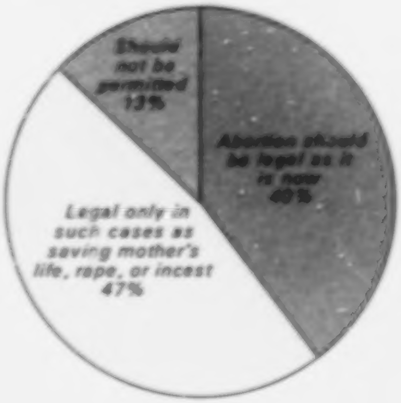
Question: Do you favor or oppose a ban on all abortions except in the case of rape, incest, or when the mother's life is endangered?



Note: Sample = 757.

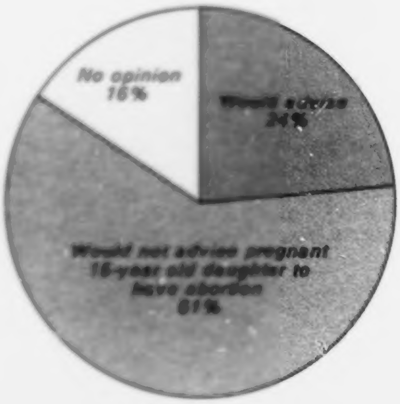
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek*, January 3-4, 1985.

Question: What do you think about abortion? Should it be legal as it is now, legal only in such cases as saving the life of the mother, rape or incest, or should it not be permitted at all?



Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, January 14-17, 1985.

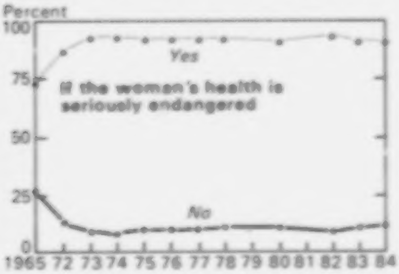
Question: Suppose you had a fifteen-year-old, unmarried daughter who told you she had recently become pregnant. Would you advise her to have an abortion or not?



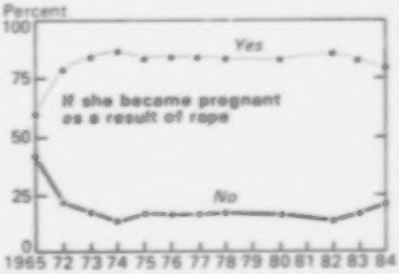
Note: Sample size = 505.

Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 18-20, 1985.

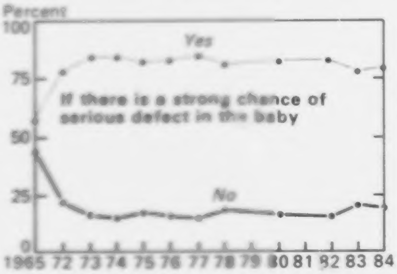
Question: Please tell me whether or not you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a *legal* abortion. . .



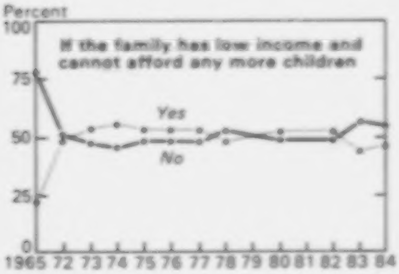
	1965	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		%		%	%	%
Yes	73	86	92	93	91	91	91	90		90		92	90	90
No	27	14	8	7	9	9	9	10		10		8	10	11



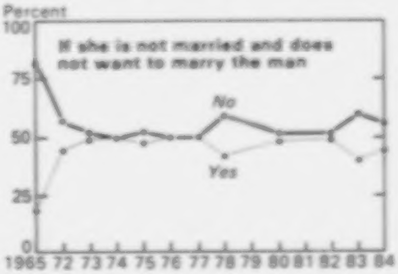
	1965	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		%		%	%	%
Yes	59	79	84	86	83	84	84	84		83		86	83	80
No	41	21	16	14	17	16	16	16		17		14	17	20



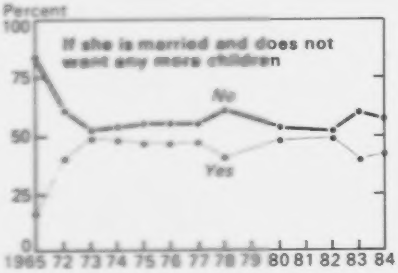
	1965	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		%		%	%	%
Yes	57	79	85	86	83	84	86	82		83		84	79	80
No	43	21	15	14	17	16	14	18		17		16	21	20



	1965	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		%		%	%	%
Yes	22	49	54	55	53	53	54	47		52		52	44	46
No	78	51	46	45	47	47	46	53		48		48	56	54



	1965	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		%		%	%	%
Yes	18	44	49	50	48	50	50	41		48		49	40	44
No	82	56	51	50	52	50	50	59		52		51	61	56

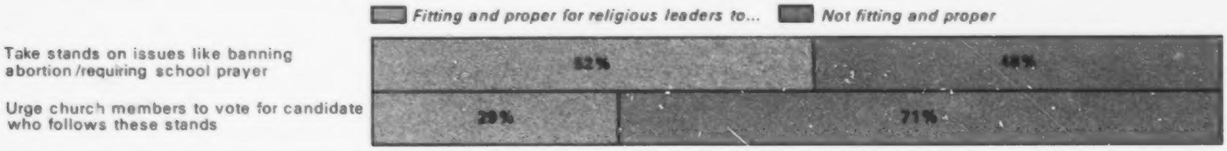


	1965	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%		%		%	%	%
Yes	16	40	47	47	46	46	47	40		47		48	39	43
No	84	60	53	53	54	54	53	60		53		52	61	57

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center as cited in *Family Planning Perspectives*, September/October 1980, p. 252, 1965; NORC, General Social Surveys, 1972-1984.

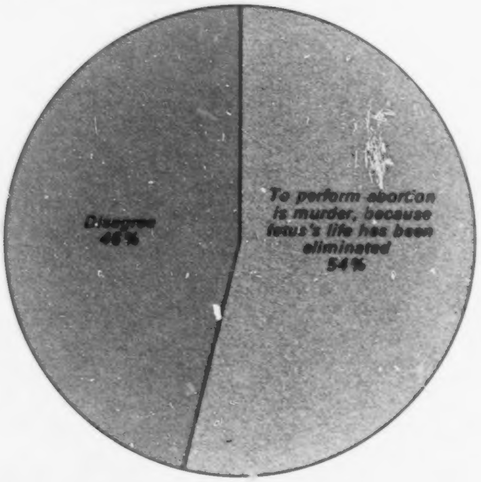
Sources of the Dilemma

Question: Now here is what this question comes down to—the difference between churches taking a stand on an issue such as abortion and prayer on the one hand, and urging their church members to vote for candidates who follow their church stands on the other. Do you think it is fitting and proper or not for religious leaders to . . . Take stands on (Urge their church members to vote for specific candidates who follow their stands on . . .) issues such as banning abortion and requiring school prayer?



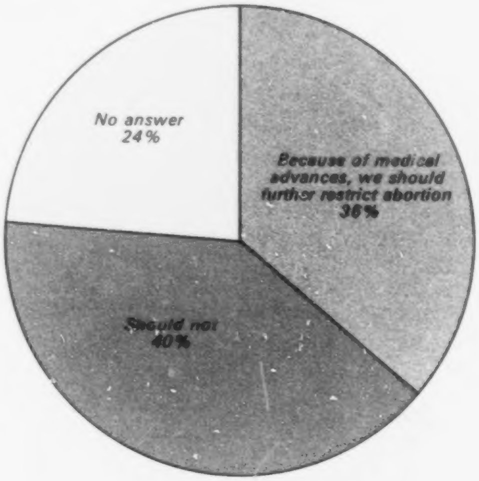
Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, September 21-25, 1984.

Question: (Now let me read you some statements that have been made about abortions. For each, tell me if you agree or disagree.) . . . To perform an abortion, even during the first three months of pregnancy, is the equivalent of murder, because a fetus's life has been eliminated.



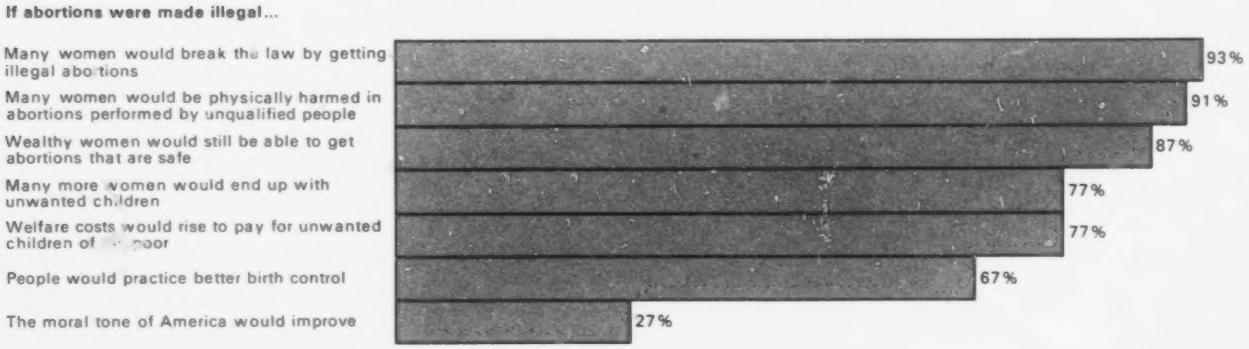
Note: Sample size = 1,254.
Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, January 24-27, 1985.

Question: Advances in medical science now make it possible for a fetus to be kept alive outside the mother's body at an earlier stage than ever before. Do you think this should or should not put further restrictions on whether an abortion can be performed?



Note: Sample size = 757.
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek*, January 3-4, 1985.

Question: If abortions were made illegal under just about all circumstances, do you think the following would or would not happen?



Note: Sample size = 757.
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek*, January 3-4, 1985.

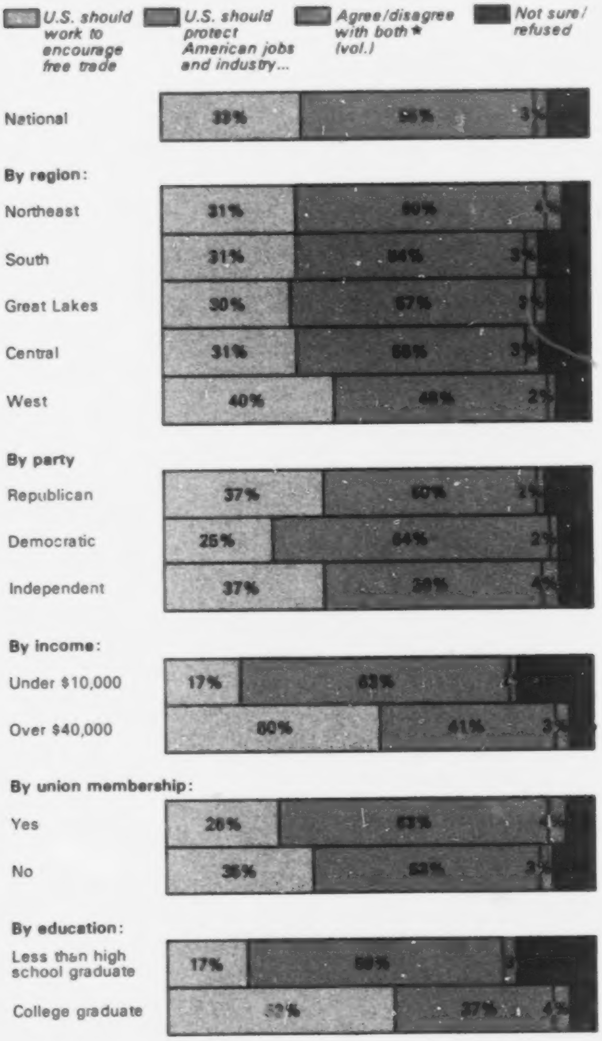
TRADE TALKS

The data in the next six pages show that Americans are concerned about import competition and want something done about it. But the data also contradict the often-heard suggestion that we are awash in demands for protectionism. The public has no trouble appreciating arguments for free trade. While they are uncomfortable with our trade imbalance, they would like to see *more* trade with Japan. They believe the U.S. will suffer if we raise trade barriers, and they feel that additional restrictions may do more to raise prices than protect jobs.

Swirling beneath these general perceptions on trade are more specific views that feed into them. The urge many Americans feel to "buy American" has been tempered by the reality of integrated economies. Besides, the public is aware of our competitors' strength in product quality and value. What the public really wants is for the U.S. to get its own act together: "We can compete effectively," they seem to be saying, "so, let's do it."

DO SOMETHING

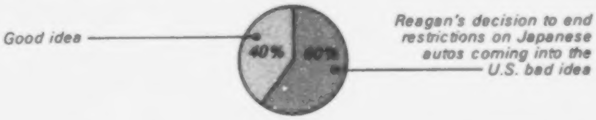
Question: In general, which of the following two policy positions are you most in agreement with. . . . First, the United States should work to encourage free trade among countries by opposing such trade barriers as tariffs and import quotas in all countries, including our own. Or, the United States should protect American industry and jobs from foreign competition by imposing tariffs that would raise the prices of imports or by imposing quotas that would limit imports.



Note: Categories combined. Less than high school graduate = didn't attend and not a high school graduate.

Source: Survey by Gordon Black for *USA Today*, May 30-June 1, 1984.

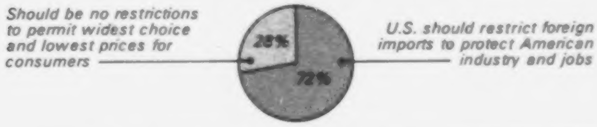
Question: Recently, President Reagan ended restrictions on Japanese auto imports to this country, which had been limited to a 22% share of the market. Do you think it was a good or a bad idea to end all restrictions on Japanese autos coming into the United States?



Note: Sample size = 1,253.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, March 14-17, 1985.

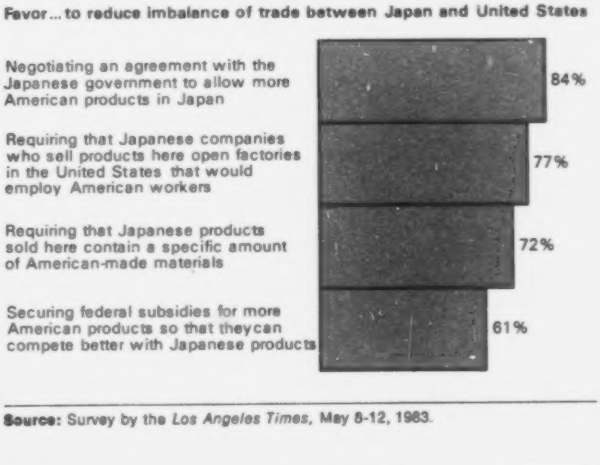
Question: Do you think it should be the policy of the United States to restrict foreign imports into this country in order to protect American industry and American jobs . . . or do you think there should be no restrictions on the sale of foreign products in the United States in order to permit the widest choice and the lowest prices for the American consumer?



Note: A February 1984 poll produced the same results. Republicans were slightly less likely than Democrats to favor restrictions (70% to 75%).

Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 28-May 3, 1984.

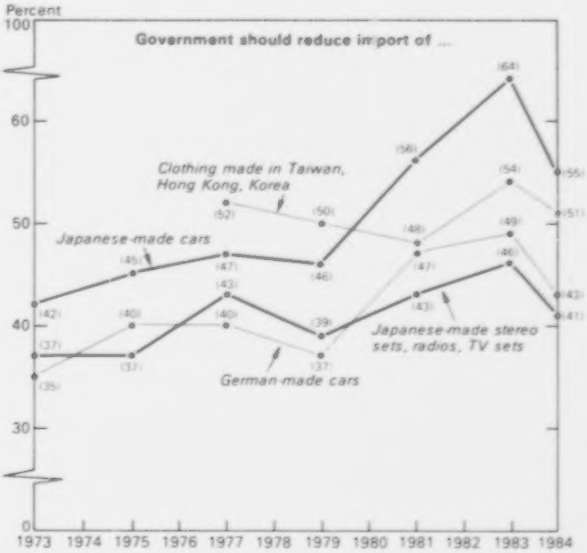
Question: There have been a number of suggestions about how to reduce the imbalance of trade between Japan and the United States. Let me suggest a few and, after each one, I'd like your opinion about it. For example, . . .



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, May 8-12, 1983.

LET'S BE SPECIFIC

Question: Now, taking into account quality, value, effect on jobs for Americans, and so on, do you think the government should reduce the number of any of those products now being imported into this country? (If "yes") Which ones?

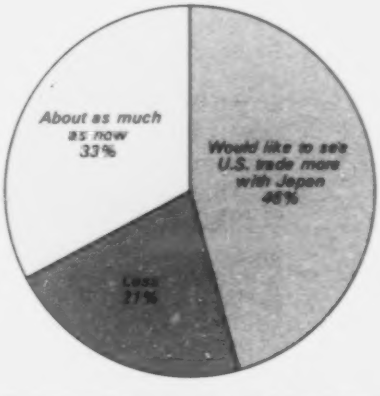


Note: "None of them" and "Don't know" not shown. "Italian wine" not shown = 28% in 1981, 30% in 1983, and 25% in 1984. "None of them" (not shown) were—in chronological order—30%, 31%, 24%, 25%, 26%, 22%, 26%.

Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-10), latest that of October 27-November 3, 1984.

IN PRACTICE, ENCOURAGE FREE TRADE AND COMPETITION

Question: All in all, would you like to see the United States trade more with Japan, less, or about as much as it does now?

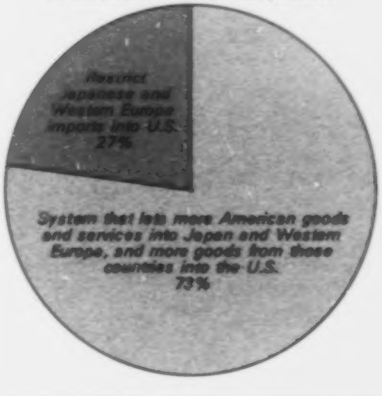


Note: Thirty-five percent of those with less than a high school education favored more trade with Japan compared to 60% of college graduates. Fifty-two percent of those eighteen to twenty-four, favored more trade, compared to 39% of those fifty and over.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Asahi Shimbum*, March 5-21, 1982.

Question: Now if you had to choose, which do you think is a better way to correct the present imbalance in trade with Japan and Western Europe—restricting Japanese and Western European imports into the United States, or a system under which more American goods and services would be allowed into Japan and Western Europe and more goods from those countries would be allowed into the United States?

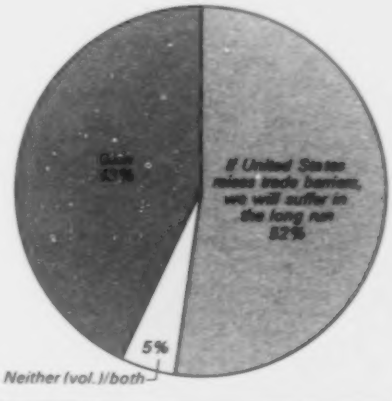
To correct trade imbalance prefer...



Note: Sample size = 1,253.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, April 20-25, 1983.

Question: Some people say that if this country raises trade barriers against foreign products entering this country, those countries will turn around and raise barriers against our products. Other people say that these foreign countries may not retaliate because they need our trade too much. What do you think? If we raise trade barriers, will the United States suffer in the long run, or gain in the long run?

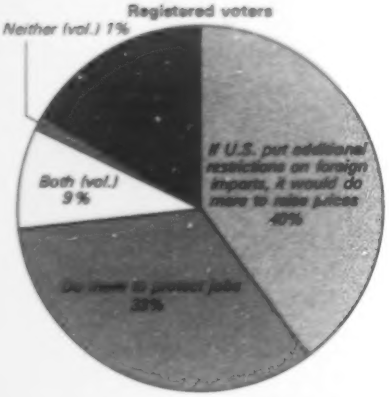


Note: Sample size = 1,395.

Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, May 8-12, 1983.

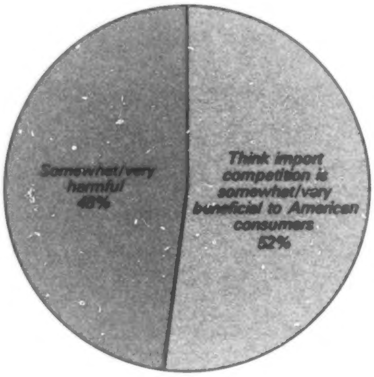
ASSESSING COSTS AND BENEFITS

Question: If the United States put additional restrictions on foreign imports, would that do more to protect American jobs, or would that do more to raise the prices of things people buy?



Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, October 14-17, 1984.

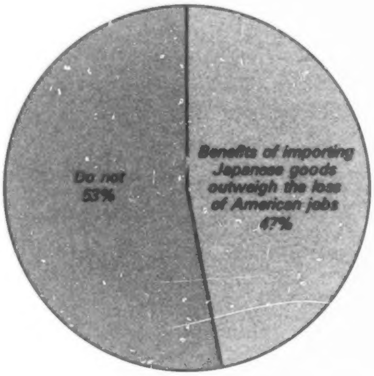
Question: (I would like to ask you about the great number of products that are imported into this country from abroad.) In general, as far as American consumers are concerned, do you think that this import competition is very harmful, somewhat harmful, somewhat beneficial, or very beneficial?



Note: Sample size = 1,248.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, February 11-16, 1983.

Question: Most people agree that Japanese imports hold down inflation in the United States and also force U.S. companies to be more competitive on prices and quality. At the same time, Japanese imports also cost American jobs. Now, if you had to say, do you think the benefits of importing Japanese goods outweigh the loss of American jobs, or not?

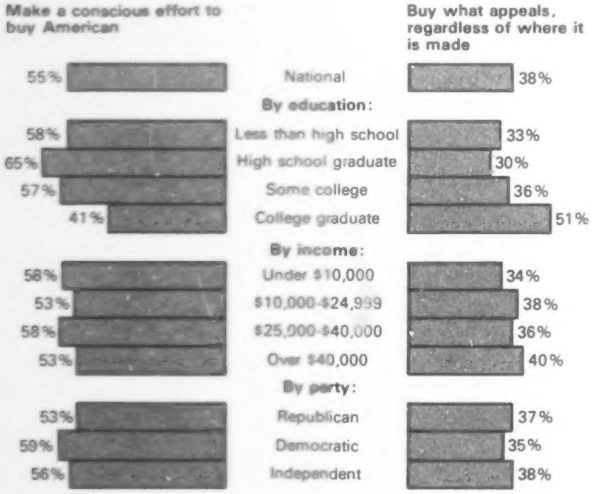


Note: Sample size = 1,253.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, March 14-17, 1985.

"BUY AMERICAN" GETS AN EDGE, BUT NOT A LARGE ONE

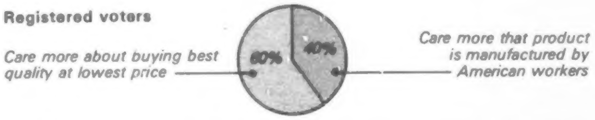
Question: When you are buying products for yourself or your home, do you make a conscious effort to try to buy things made in the United States, or do you simply buy what appeals to you, regardless of where it is made?



Note: In a survey by Audits & Surveys for the Merit Report in 1981, 69% said they had an obligation to buy an American-made product "where price and quality are about the same"; 31% disagreed. Sixty-seven percent of those whose income was under $15,000 said they had an obligation, compared to 72% of those whose income was over $25,000. Younger people felt much less of an obligation (57%) than those over fifty (78%).

Source: Survey by Gordon Black for *USA Today*, May 30-June 1, 1984.

Question: Do you care more about whether a product is manufactured by American workers, or do you care more about simply buying the best quality goods at the lowest price?

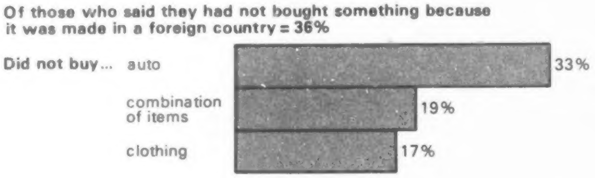


Note: Eighteen to thirty-four year olds were more sensitive to the best quality goods at the lowest price (72%) than were those sixty and over (45%). Those with higher educations and those with greater incomes were more concerned about quality than their lower education and lower income counterparts. Sample size = 1,019 registered voters.

Source: Survey by Penn + Schoen for The Garth Analysis, February 19-20, 1983.

PARTICULAR SENSITIVITY ON AUTOS

Question: Have you ever not bought something because it was made in a foreign country? (If "Yes") What was it that you decided not to buy?



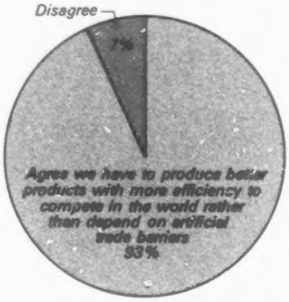
Note: No other category was more than 8 percent. Sample size = 1,145. "Combination of items" meant respondent named two or more items.

Source: Survey by *New York Times*, June 13-18, 1983.

OPINION ROUNDUP

WE CAN AND MUST COMPETE

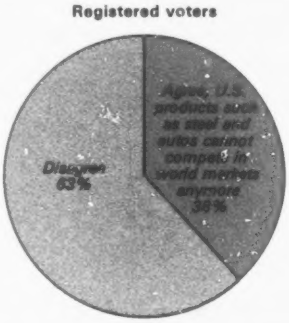
Question: Now let me read you some statements that have been made about trade between the United States and foreign countries. For each, would you tell me if you tend to agree or disagree. . . . We have to produce better products with more efficiency to compete in the world rather than depend on artificial trade barriers, such as tariffs.



Note: Sample size = 1,248.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, February 11-16, 1983.

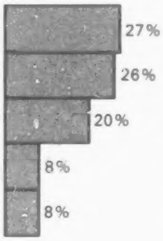
Question: Do you agree or disagree with people who say that U.S. products such as steel and automobiles cannot compete in the world markets at home or abroad anymore?



Note: Of those who agreed that U.S. products "cannot compete" anymore, 46% said labor unions were very responsible, 36% said American companies, 30% unfair trade practices by countries such as Japan, 25% the workers in the industry, 25% lower living standards, and 24% U.S. government trade policies. Sample size = 1,008 registered voters.

Source: Survey by *Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White, March 1-3, 1983.

Question: The American steel industry has declined in recent years. What do you think has been the main reason?

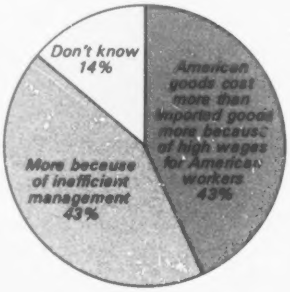


National		Income under $15,000	Income over $35,000
Failure of management to remain competitive	27%	23%	33%
High paid union workers	26%	20%	30%
Lower cost of imported steel	20%	24%	16%
Higher quality of imported steel	8%	10%	7%
Federal regulations	8%	6%	5%

Note: "Don't know" not shown = 11%. Sample size = 1,017.

Source: Survey by The Analysis Group for the *Los Angeles Times*, New York Stock Exchange, and UCLA Graduate School of Management, January 2-14, 1985 (for Public Policy Analysis, Inc.).

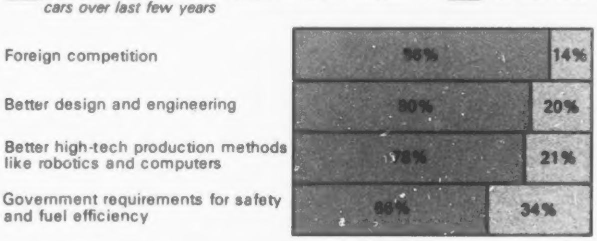
Question: Do you think American goods cost more than imported goods more because of high wages for American workers, or because of inefficient American management?



Note: A survey by James Lauer and Associates for the UAW in August 1984 found that 40% of those surveyed said American auto workers were overpaid, 39% said they were paid about right, and 9% said they were underpaid.

Source: Survey by Penn + Schoen for The Garth Analysis, February 19-20, 1983.

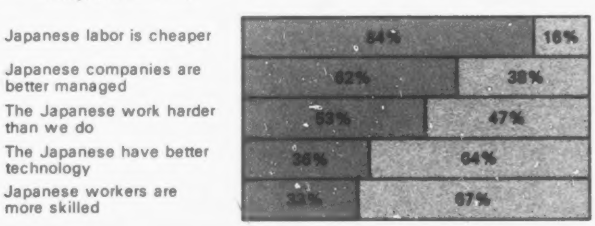
Question: As you know, a lot of products made in Japan such as TV sets, VCRs, computers, motorcycles, autos, and others are successfully sold in this country. Now, do you think an important reason why Japanese products are competitive in the United States is because (Read each item), or not?



Note: Sample size = 1,253.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, March 14-17, 1985.

Question: A lot of people have said American cars have improved over the past few years. I'm going to read a list of reasons people have given to explain these improvements. For each, please tell me if it is a believable explanation or not a believable explanation. . . .

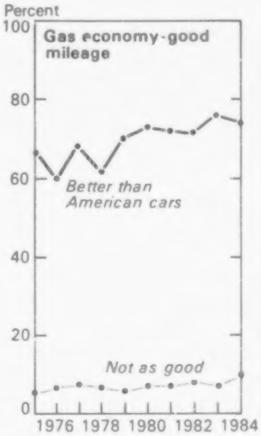


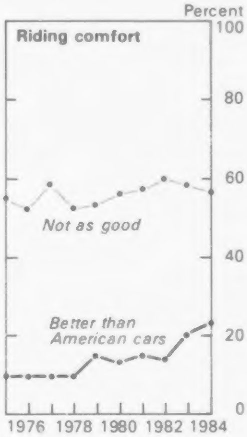
Source: Survey by James Lauer and Associates for the UAW, August 1984.

WHERE WE'RE STRONG, WHERE WE'RE NOT

Question: We'd like to get your general impression of foreign cars versus American cars of more or less comparable size. I'll read off some qualities or characteristics of cars, and for each ask you how you think foreign cars compare with American cars. First, gas economy—getting good mileage. In general, would you say foreign cars are a lot better, a little better, not quite as good, or not nearly as good as American cars of comparable size?

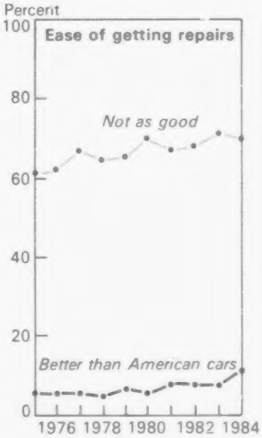
	Better	Not as good	Don't know/ No answer
1975	66%	6%	18%
1976	60	7	21
1977	68	8	15
1978	61	7	20
1979	70	6	13
1980	73	7	12
1981	72	7	10
1982	71	8	11
1983	76	7	8
1984	74	10	8

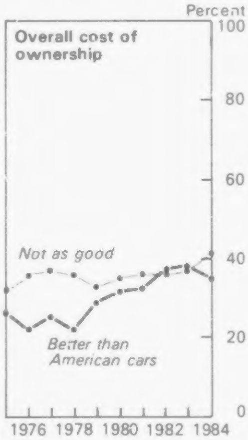




	Better	Not as good	Don't know/ No answer
1975	10%	55%	20%
1976	10	52	23
1977	10	59	18
1978	10	52	21
1979	16	53	14
1980	13	56	15
1981	16	57	13
1982	14	60	13
1983	20	59	10
1984	23	57	10

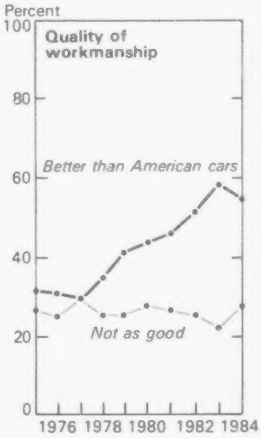
	Better	Not as good	Don't know/ No answer
1975	5%	61%	24%
1976	5	62	25
1977	5	67	20
1978	4	64	23
1979	6	65	18
1980	5	70	17
1981	8	67	16
1982	8	68	16
1983	8	71	12
1984	11	70	11

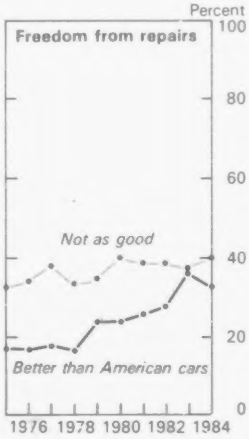




	Better	Not as good	Don't know/ No answer
1975	26%	32%	26%
1976	22	36	29
1977	25	37	23
1978	22	36	27
1979	28	33	22
1980	31	35	21
1981	32	36	18
1982	37	36	18
1983	38	37	16
1984	35	41	14

	Better	Not as good	Don't know/ No answer
1975	32%	27%	22%
1976	31	25	25
1977	30	30	20
1978	35	25	23
1979	41	25	16
1980	44	28	15
1981	46	27	13
1982	51	26	13
1983	58	23	10
1984	55	27	9



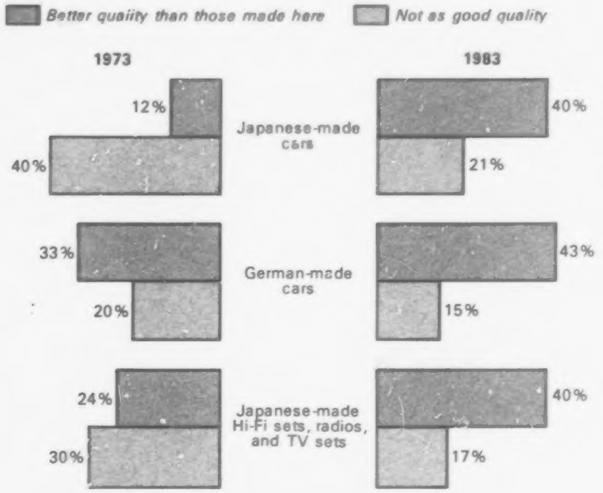


	Better	Not as good	Don't know/ No answer
1975	18%	33%	30%
1976	17	34	31
1977	18	38	25
1978	17	34	28
1979	24	35	22
1980	24	40	22
1981	26	39	19
1982	28	39	21
1983	36	37	15
1984	33	40	15

Note: "About equal" not shown.

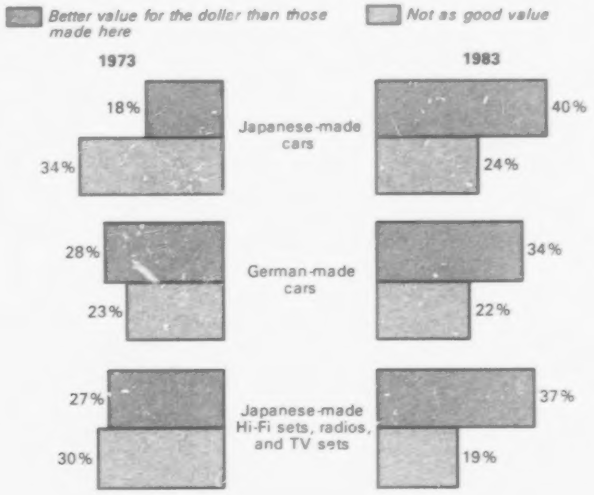
Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-6), latest that of May 29-June 3, 1984.

Question: Now here is a list of some of the kinds of imported products now being sold in this country. (Card shown respondent) Would you read down that list and for each one tell me whether you think the products are usually better quality than those made here, about the same quality as those made here, or not as good quality as those made here? . . .



Note: "About the same quality" and "Don't know" not shown. "About the same" = 25%, 28%, 30% in 1973, 30%, 27%, 34% in 1983, "Don't know" = 24%, 20%, 15% in 1973, 9%, 15%, 9% in 1983 (for quality).

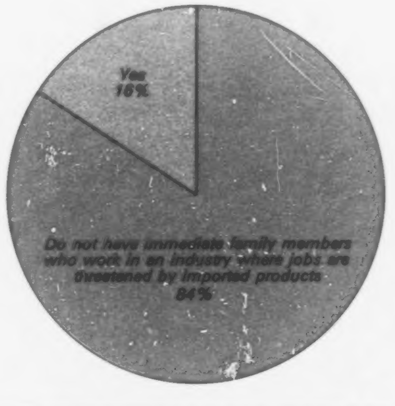
Question: Now would you tell me for each of those products whether you think they are usually a better value for the dollar than those made here, about equal value for the dollar, or not as good value for the dollar as those made here? . . .



Note: "About the same quality" and "Don't know" not shown. "About the same" = 23%, 29%, 28% for 1973 and 30%, 27%, 34% for 1983. "Don't know" = 24%, 20%, 16% for 1973 and 9%, 15%, 9% for 1983 (for value).

Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 83-3), latest that of February 12-26, 1983.

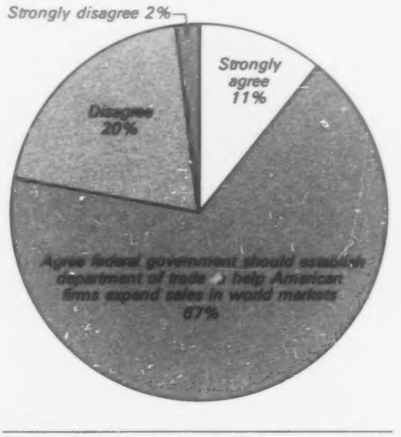
Question: Do any members of your immediate family work in an industry where jobs are threatened by imported products?



Note: Sample size = 915.

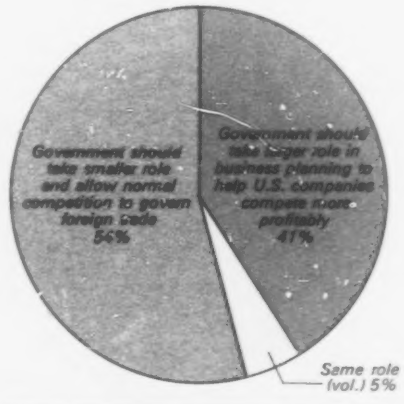
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek*, May 14-17, 1983.

Question: The federal government should establish a department of trade to help American firms expand sales in the world market. (Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree?)



Source: Survey by The Analysis Group for the *Los Angeles Times*, New York Stock Exchange, and UCLA Graduate School of Management, January 2-14, 1985 (for Public Policy Analysis, Inc).

Question: Do you think the government should take a larger role in business planning to help U.S. companies compete more profitably in foreign trade. . . . Or do you think the government should take a smaller role in business planning and allow normal competition to govern foreign trade?



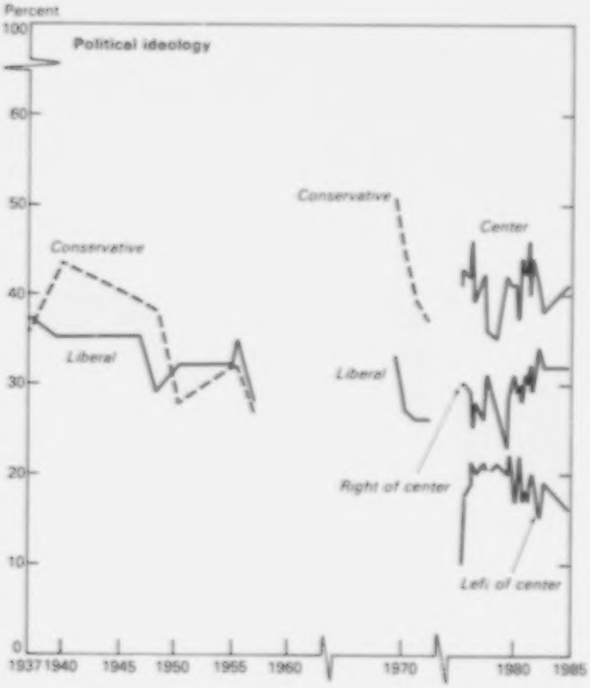
Note: Sample size = 1,395.

Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, May 8-12, 1983.

IDEOLOGY: WHERE HAVE ALL THE LIBERALS GONE?

HISTORICAL TREND

Question: In politics, do you regard yourself as a radical, a liberal, or a conservative? (1937, 1939) Do you consider yourself to be a conservative, or a liberal in your political views? (1947, 1948, 1950) Taking everything into account, would you say that in general, you think of yourself as a liberal—or as a conservative? (Dec. 1954-Jan. 1955) Would you say that you, yourself, are more of a liberal or more of a conservative in politics? (May 1955) Taking everything into account, would you say that you, yourself, are more of a liberal or more of a conservative in politics? (Jan. 1957) How would you describe your political beliefs—as conservative, moderately conservative, moderately liberal, or liberal? (1969) Suppose you had to classify yourself as either a liberal, or a conservative, which would you say you are? (April 1970) How would you describe yourself—as very conservative, fairly conservative, middle-of-the-road, fairly liberal, or very liberal? (1971 and April 1972) Looking at the statements on this card, how would you describe yourself . . . very conservative, fairly conservative, middle-of-the-road, fairly liberal, very liberal? (1973) People who are conservative in their political views are referred to as being right of center and people who are liberal in their political views are referred to as being left of center. Which one of these categories, (Respondents were handed card listing eight categories—far left, substantially left, moderately left, slightly left, slightly right, moderately right, substantially right, far right) best describes your *own* political position? (July 1975-November 1984)



Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of November 9-12, 1984.

	Radical	**Liberal**		**Conservative**	**Don't know/ Undecided/ No opinion**
Apr. 1937	2%	37%		36%	25%
June 1939	2	35		43	20
Jan. 1947		35		39	26
Mar. 1948		29		38	33
Mar. 1950		32		28	25
Dec. 1954-Jan. 1955		32		32	36
May 1955		35		32	33
			In-between (Vol)		
Jan. 1957		28	17%	27	28
July 1969		33		51	16
Apr. 1970		27		45	28
			Middle-of-the-road		
Apr. 1971		26	29%	39	6
Apr. 1972		26	33	37	4

	Left of center	**Center**	**Right of center**	**Don't know/ Undecided/ No opinion**
July 1975	10%	41%	30%	19%
Oct. 1975	18	43	20	19
Mar. 1976	19	42	29	10
June 1976	21	46	25	8
August 1976	20	39	28	13
July 1977	21	42	26	11
October 1977	20	36	31	13
August 1978	21	35	27	17
May 1979	20	42	23	15
October 1979	22	41	29	8
March 1980	17	41	31	11
May 1980	20	39	29	12
August 1980	22	37	30	11
September 1980	17	44	28	11
February 1981	18	42	31	9
March 1981	17	46	30	7
June 1981	19	40	32	9
October 1981	20	44	27	9
March 1982	15	41	34	10
September 1982	19	38	32	11
November 1984	16	41	32	11

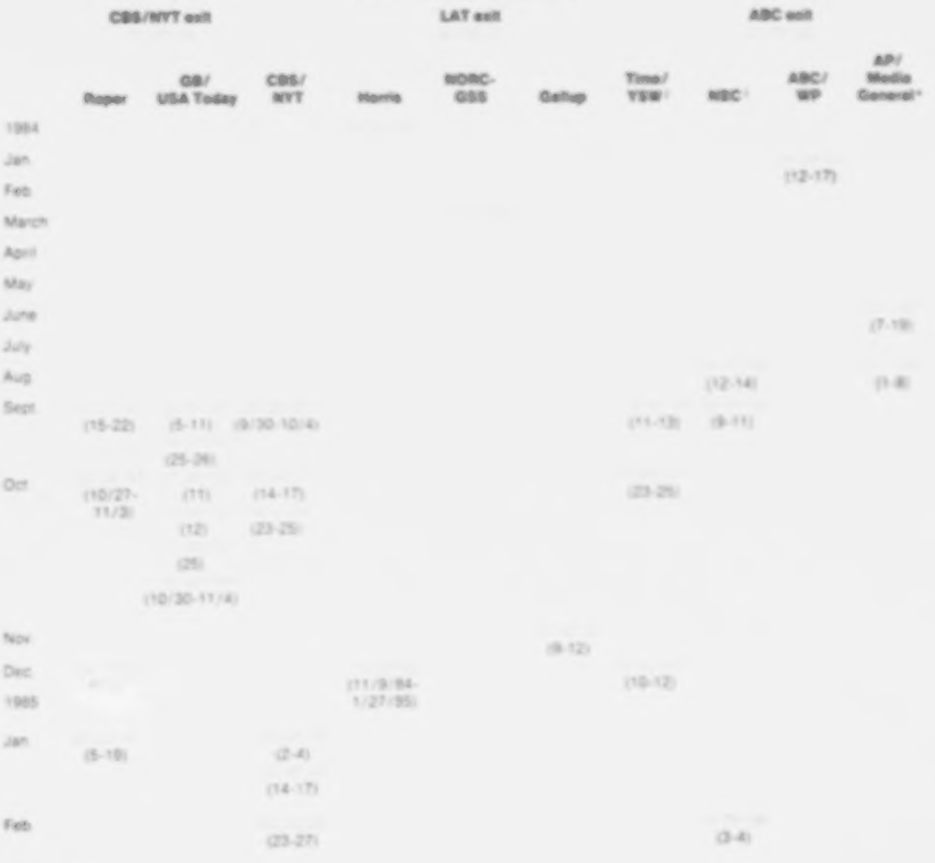
Note: For July 1975-November 1984, "Left of center" = Far left + Substantially left + Moderately left, "Center" = Slightly left + Slightly right + Middle of the road (Vol); "Right of center" = Far right + Substantially right + Moderately right.

OPINION ROUNDUP

RECENT INDICATORS

Question: On most political matters do you consider yourself liberal, moderate, or conservative? (**CBS/*New York Times* exit**) In most political matters, do you consider yourself very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, very conservative? (***Los Angeles Times* exit**) Regardless of the party you may favor, do you lean more toward the liberal side or the conservative side politically? (**ABC exit**) Now thinking politically and socially, how would you describe your own general outlook—as being very conservative, middle-of-the-road, moderately liberal or very liberal? (**Roper Reports**) Do you consider yourself to be a liberal, a conservative or "middle-of-the-road" in political philosophy? (***USA Today***) How would you describe your view on most political matters? Generally, do you think of yourself as liberal, moderate, or conservative? (**CBS/*New York Times***) How do you describe your own personal political philosophy—conservative, middle-of-the-road, or liberal? (**Harris**) We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal—point 1—to extremely conservative—point 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale? (**NORC-GSS**) People who are conservative in their political views are referred to as being right of center and people who are liberal in their political views are referred to as being left of center. Which one of these categories (survey respondents were handed a card listing—far left, substantially left, moderately left, slightly left, slightly right, moderately right, substantially right, far right) best describes your own political position? (**Gallup**) Do you think of yourself as conservative, moderate, liberal, radical? (**Time/Yankelovich, Skelly and White**) In politics today do you generally consider yourself to be very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, very conservative, or haven't you thought much about it? (**NBC**) Picture a scale from 1 to 7, when '1' stands for the most liberal position a person can hold on political matters and '7' stands for the most conservative position. At what number from one to seven would you put yourself, or don't you think of yourself in those terms? (**ABC/*Washington Post***) Do you consider yourself more conservative or liberal? (**AP/Media General**)

Liberal/Moderate/Conservative



*Registered voters

Note: 1. Data from several Harris surveys in 1984. 2. "Radical" not shown. 3. Figures based on respondents who chose an ideology. "Don't think much about it" calculated out = 22% for 8/12-14/84, 23% for 9/9-11/84, 24% for 2/3-4/85. 4. "Neither" is a volunteered category, not shown. (9% for 6/7-19/84, 12% for 8/1-8/84).

(**For *LA Times* exit**) "Liberal" = Very Liberal + Somewhat Liberal; "Conservative" = Very Conservative + Somewhat Conservative. (**For ABC News exit**) "Somewhere in between" is a volunteered response. (**For Roper**) "Liberal" = Very Liberal + Moderately Liberal; "Conservative" = Very Conservative + Moderately Conservative. Question asked political and social ideology. (**For NORC-GSS**) "Liberal" = Extremely Liberal + Liberal + Slightly Liberal; "Conservative" = Extremely Conservative + Conservative + Slightly Conservative. (**For Gallup**) "Left" = Far Left + Substantially Left + Moderately Left; "Moderate" = Slightly Left + Middle-of-the-road (Vol.) + Slightly Right; "Right" = Far Right + Substantially Right + Moderately Right. (**For NBC News**) "Liberal" = Very Liberal + Somewhat Liberal; "Conservative" = Very Conservative + Somewhat Conservative. (**For ABC News/Washington Post**) "Liberal" = Points 1-3, "Moderate" = Point 4, "Conservative = Points 5-7, on a seven-point scale. (**For Associated Press/Media General**) No moderate category is offered.

"Don't Know," "Not Sure," "No Opinion," "No Answer," and "Refused," calculated out for comparison purposes. (All 10% or less combined, except for Gordon Black/***USA Today***, 9/5-11/84 = 11%.) Figures on page 35 are not recalculated because of the high "Don't Knows."

Looking at Ideology: Selected Groups

When reviewing the data on pages 35-40, we should keep in mind that what we have before us is simply political self-description: how respondents think of themselves. Research has shown that terms like "liberal," "conservative," and even "moderate" mean different things to different people.

Nonetheless, various groups do describe themselves in liberal/conservative terms, much as political analysts would describe them. Rank-and-file Democrats, for example, are far more likely to identify as liberals than are Republicans. Persons in the lowest income groups are more apt to say they are liberals than are those with high incomes. Blacks more than whites say they are liberals. And a particularly striking gap separates the ideological identities of college-educated Democrats and Republicans.

The NORC and Roper surveys (pages 37-40) differ somewhat on overall distributions of the public into liberal and conservative camps. But these data, as well as those from other surveys, show the same basic relationships in the positions of the various groups.

EVERETT CARLL LADD

Roper National 21 Liberal/35 Moderate/44 Conservative **NORC** National 24 Liberal/41 Moderate/35 Conservative

SEX

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Male	+24	21%	34%	45%	23%	38%	39%	+16
Female	+21	22	35	43	24	43	33	+ 9

RACE

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
White	+27	19%	35%	46%	23%	41%	36%	+13
Black	−11	41	29	30	31	43	27	− 4

AGE

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
18-24 years	+11	25%	38%	36%	31%	41%	29%	− 2
25-39 years	+14	26	35	40	30	40	30	0
40-54 years	+25	20	35	45	19	40	41	+22
55-64 years	+34	17	32	51	15	40	46	+31
65 and over	+39	14	32	53	17	45	38	+21

UNION MEMBER

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Union member	+14	25%	36%	39%	30%	37%	33%	+ 3

INCOME

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Less than $10,000	+ 9	27%	37%	36%	29%	40%	32%	+ 3
$10,000-$14,999	+22	22	34	44	25	41	33	+ 8
$15,000-$19,999	+17	23	37	40	22	48	30	+ 8
$20,000-$24,999	+26	20	34	46	23	42	36	+13
$25,000-$34,999	+31	19	32	50	21	45	34	+13
$35,000-$49,999	+25	22	31	47	22	38	41	+19
$50,000 & over	+25	18	39	43	25	26	50	+25

QUESTION WORDING FOR PAGES 37-40

NORC We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal—point 1—to extremely conservative—point 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale

Note: "Liberal" = Extremely liberal + Liberal + Slightly liberal (pts. 1-3). "Conservative" = Extremely conservative + Conservative + Slightly conservative (pts. 5-7)

Source: Surveys by National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, combined for 1983 and 1984.

ROPER Now, thinking politically and socially, how would you describe your own general outlook—as being very conservative, moderately conservative, middle-of-the-road, moderately liberal, or very liberal?

Note: "Liberal" = Moderately liberal + Very liberal. "Conservative" = Moderately conservative + Very conservative.

Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization, combined data from three studies conducted September 15-22, 1984; October 27-November 3, 1984; and December 1-8, 1984.

Roper National 21 Liberal/35 Moderate/44 Conservative **NORC** National 24 Liberal/41 Moderate/35 Conservative

MARITAL STATUS

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Married	+30	18%	34%	48%	20%	42%	38%	+18
Single	+ 4	30	36	34	34	38	29	− 5
Widowed	+36	16	32	52	19	44	37	+18
Separated/ divorced	+ 7	29	35	36	30	39	31	+ 1

RELIGION (Whites only)

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Protestant	+35	16%	33%	51%	19%	40%	41%	+22
Catholic	+22	19	40	41	26	43	32	+ 6
Jewish	+ 6	31	32	37	36	30	34	− 2
None	− 9	40	29	31	42	38	20	−22

RELIGION

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Protestant	+28	20%	32%	48%	20%	40%	40%	+20
Catholic	+20	20	40	40	25	44	31	+ 6
Jewish	+ 6	31	32	37	36	30	34	− 2
None	−12	42	28	30	42	37	21	−21

	NORC			Con. minus Lib.
	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Baptist	19%	44%	37%	+18
Methodist	19	49	32	+13
Lutheran	23	40	38	+15
Presbyterian	29	30	40	+11
Episcopal	22	38	40	+18

SOCIAL CLASS

	Con. minus Lib.	NORC		
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.
Lower class	−10	34%	42%	24%
Working class	+ 8	23	45	31
Middle class	+16	24	36	40
Upper class	+26	19	36	45

OCCUPATION

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Executive-professional	+22	25%	29%	47%	24%	35%	41%	+17
White collar	+21	22	35	43	24	40	35	+11
Blue collar	+18	22	39	40	24	44	32	+ 8

Roper National 21 Liberal/35 Moderate/44 Conservative **NORC** National 24 Liberal/41 Moderate/35 Conservative

AGE/EDUCATION

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
18-24 years who are/have								
Less than high school graduate	− 2	31%	41%	29%	33%	46%	21%	−12
High school graduate	+14	23	40	37	27	42	30	+ 3
Some college	+12	26	37	38	27	38	35	+ 8
College graduate	+12	27	33	39	43	34	23	−20
25-39 years who are/have								
Less than high school graduate	+12	21	45	33	29	48	23	− 6
High school graduate	+18	22	38	40	24	44	33	+ 9
Some college	+14	26	34	40	32	41	28	− 4
College graduate	+10	32	26	42	39	29	33	− 6
40-54 years who are/have								
Less than high school graduate	+12	25	38	37	23	44	33	+10
High school graduate	+32	16	37	48	12	52	36	+24
Some college	+33	16	35	49	23	36	40	+17
College graduate	+20	26	28	46	25	16	59	+34
55-64 years who are/have								
Less than high school graduate	+27	21	31	48	19	37	44	+25
High school graduate	+42	12	34	54	11	51	39	+28
Some college	+41	12	35	53	15	29	56	+41
College graduate	+28	24	24	52	15	28	58	+43
65 and over who are/have								
Less than high school graduate	+38	15	32	53	20	46	35	+15
High school graduate	+39	12	37	51	14	52	34	+20
Some college	+40	13	34	53	14	43	43	+29
College graduate	+37	19	24	56	16	27	57	+41

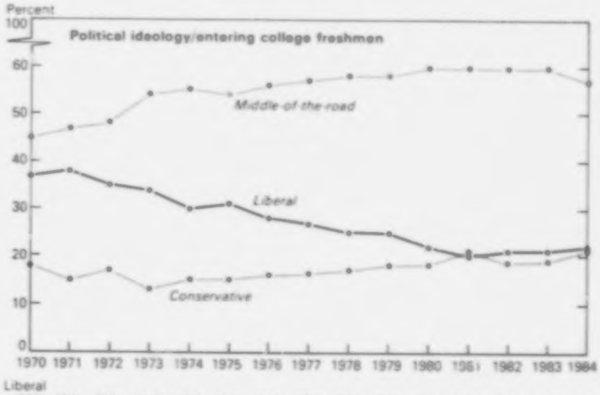
EDUCATION

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Less than high school graduate	+21	21%	36%	42%	24%	44%	32%	+ 8
High school graduate	+27	18	37	45	18	47	34	+16
Some college	+23	21	35	44	26	39	35	+ 9
College graduate-postgraduate	+17	28	27	45	31	26	42	+11

EDUCATION (Whites only)

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Less than high school graduate	+32	15%	38%	47%	23%	44%	33%	+10
High school graduate	+30	16	38	46	17	48	35	+18
Some college	+25	20	36	45	26	39	35	+ 9
College graduate-postgraduate	+19	27	27	45	31	26	43	+12

Question: How would you characterize your political views?



	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Liberal	37%	38%	35%	35%	30%	31%	28%	27%	25%	25%	22%	20%	21%	21%	22%
Middle-of-the-road	45	47	48	51	55	54	56	57	58	58	60	60	60	60	57
Conservative	18	15	17	15	15	15	16	16	17	18	18	21	19	19	21

Note: "Liberal" = Far Left + Liberal; "Conservative" = Far Right + Conservative.

Source: *American Freshmen: National Norms for Fall . . .*, Cooperative Institutional Research Program, American Council on Education and the University of California, Los Angeles, latest that of 1984.

Roper National 21 Liberal/35 Moderate/44 Conservative **NORC** National 24 Liberal/41 Moderate/35 Conservative

REGION

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Northeast	+15	23%	39%	38%	26%	43%	31%	+ 5
North Central	+27	20	33	47	23	43	34	+11
South	+24	21	35	45	23	40	37	+14
West	+24	22	32	46	25	36	39	+14

REGION (Whites only)

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Northeast	+18	22%	38%	40%	27%	43%	31%	+ 4
North Central	+28	19	33	47	22	42	36	+14
South	+33	15	37	48	21	40	39	+18
West	+25	22	31	47	25	36	39	+14

PARTY

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Democrat	+ 5	30%	34%	35%	31%	42%	27%	− 4
Republican	+52	10	28	62	10	34	56	+46
Independent	+17	23	37	40	26	44	30	+ 4

POLITICAL PARTY BY EDUCATION

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER			NORC			Con. minus Lib.
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.	Lib.	Mod.	Con.	
Democrat who is/has								
Less than a high school graduate	+11	27%	35%	38%	26%	45%	29%	+ 3
A high school graduate	+15	24	37	39	22	50	28	+ 6
Some college	− 3	33	37	30	36	39	25	−11
A college graduate	−17	46	25	29	54	22	25	−29
Republican who is/has								
Less than a high school graduate	+45	13	29	58	15	37	48	+33
A high school graduate	+48	10	32	58	11	44	45	+34
Some college	+55	8	29	63	9	31	59	+50
A college graduate	+59	9	23	68	7	23	70	+63
Independent who is/has								
Less than a high school graduate	+29	17	37	46	26	46	28	+ 2
A high school graduate	+24	18	40	42	19	47	34	+15
Some college	+16	23	38	39	30	44	27	− 3
A college graduate	+ 2	33	32	35	37	33	30	− 7

POLITICAL PARTY BY REGION

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER		
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.
Democrats in the Northeast	+ 6	28%	38%	34%
North Central	+10	29	32	39
South	+ 5	30	35	35
West	− 5	36	33	31
Republicans in the Northeast	+39	12	37	51
North Central	+57	8	26	65
South	+51	10	29	61
West	+61	9	20	70
Independents in the Northeast	− 2	30	41	28
North Central	+24	21	34	45
South	+39	13	35	52
West	+ 8	25	42	33

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Question: Now here is a list of things some people do about government or politics. (Hand respondent card) Have you happened to have done any of these things in the past year? (If "Yes") Which ones?

	Con. minus Lib.	ROPER		
		Lib.	Mod.	Con.
In past year have:				
Signed a petition	+20	24%	32%	44%
Attended a public meeting on town or school affairs	+19	25	30	44
Written your congressman or senator	+26	23	29	49
Attended a political rally or speech	+10	33	25	43
Served as an officer of some club or organization	+23	24	29	47
Served on a committee	+15	29	27	44
Made a speech	+18	26	30	44
Worked for a political party	+19	29	24	48
Written a letter to the paper	+17	26	31	43
Been a member of some group for better government	+14	31	24	45
Written an article	+12	30	28	42
Held or run for political office	+32	22	24	54
None of these	+24	19	38	43

by Kevin Phillips

The Politics of Protectionism

The upcoming 1985-1986 election cycle may see trade and global competitiveness promoted to the front rank of political issues for the first time since the great tariff debates of the early decades of this century. Our record trade deficit is only beginning to reflect the great upward surge of the dollar this past winter, and trade patterns usually lag six to twelve months behind currency ups and downs so we have yet to see the worst import pressures. By that calculus, debate should intensify, not slacken, throughout 1985 and into early 1986. And the Western leaders' failure at the May summit to set a 1986 starting date for new international trade negotiations adds to the plausibility of dour forecasts.

Trade is also developing an unprecedented post-World War II relevance to the larger "economic issue" —the critical politics of U.S. prosperity or recession. There's even a chance that escalating displacement of U.S. manufactures by foreign imports in our own market could spotlight a critical weakness in overall Reagan economic policy—the linkage between federal budget deficits, high interest rates, dollar overvaluation, import penetration, and possibly reemerging recession prospects. Certainly Democrats argue as much. For all these reasons, while trade may still avoid a starring role in the 1988 *presidential* election, it seems destined to be at least a major discussion point in the 1986 *congressional* races.

If so, national opinion suggests the following: Politicians who advocate more economic nationalism will find a receptive electorate; officeholders who accept present U.S. unilateral open-market policies toward Japan will find their position untenable. It is clear that the public's commitment to maintaining U.S. jobs and industries is growing. Yet major debates rarely develop out of the blue, and the trade question is no exception. It is also true that the U.S. free-trade consensus, rooted in America's massive post-World War II global economic dominance, has been slowly eroding for a quarter of a century now.

Growing Sentiment for Protectionism

No chronology can be precise. Labor's fidelity to free trade was the first to go in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as the first major wave of imports washed over the shoe, textile, and other industries. Public opinion began to solidify on the neoprotectionist side in the late 1960s and early 1970s. At that point elites were firmly committed to free-trade doctrine.

Given low national esteem for union leaders, it was not surprising that labor's early reaction against free trade did little to affect policy. It allowed support for a more self-interested U.S. trade posture to be painted as the parochialism of old-line unions and redundant, labor-dominated industries. That image still clings today, pushed by importers, retailers, foreign lobbyists, free-trade theorists, and Yuppie would-be purchasers of dhurrie rugs and capuccino machines. Yet it could not be more out of kilter with the overwhelming statistical reality of public opinion. Not just a thin slice, but a broad majority of Americans have long favored restricting foreign access to the U.S. market. High-tech as well as basic industries are now in the vanguard in demanding policy assertiveness. The Roper data in table 1 show how, since 1973, solid national majorities of 63-68 percent have steadily favored government restrictions on "imports of goods from other countries that are priced lower than American-made goods of the same kind." Dozens of other surveys flesh out that overall portrait.

Table 1
GOVERNMENT RESTRICTION OF
LOWER-PRICED IMPORTS

Question: Should government restrict imports of goods from other countries that are priced lower than American-made goods of the same kind?

	1973	1975	1977	1979	1981	1983	1984
Should restrict	63%	61%	64%	68%	62%	68%	66%
Should not	27	27	26	21	31	25	28

Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization, latest that of October-November, 1984.

It is misleading, however, to suggest that the American preference for import restraint has been constant for over a decade. Roper's is a general question that doesn't mirror underlying changes. Other yardsticks suggest a distinct recent *upsurge* of commitment to trade policy assertiveness. As shown in the chart on page 30, since 1973 there has been a relatively steady uptick in the percentage of Americans favoring government curbs on Japanese automobile and television/stereo imports. Also, over the last few months, industry after industry—autos, beer, textiles, apparel—has shifted to patriotic and nationalistic themes in its advertising (Chrysler is even using World War I songs!) as marketing surveys pick up increased public responsiveness to "Buy American" appeals. In addition, early 1985 polling by Public Policy Analysis for the New York Stock Exchange; the *Los Angeles Times*, and the UCLA Management School found an increase in national support for a new Federal Trade Department. Back in 1983, 65 percent favored the idea; by January 1985 fully 74 percent endorsed it.

As import pressures continue to bite in 1985, opinion surveys will likely register upsurges in public support for other specific trade-related policy ideas. Practically no data are available so far, but one can easily imagine increased backing for proposals now being considered in the Senate. Examples would be a temporary import surcharge or legislation to condition access to U.S. markets on: (1) reduction of a nation's trade surplus with the United States, or (2) the reciprocal openness of that country's markets to U.S. goods. With prominent members of Congress proposing remedies of this kind, pollsters should soon be plumbing their political support.

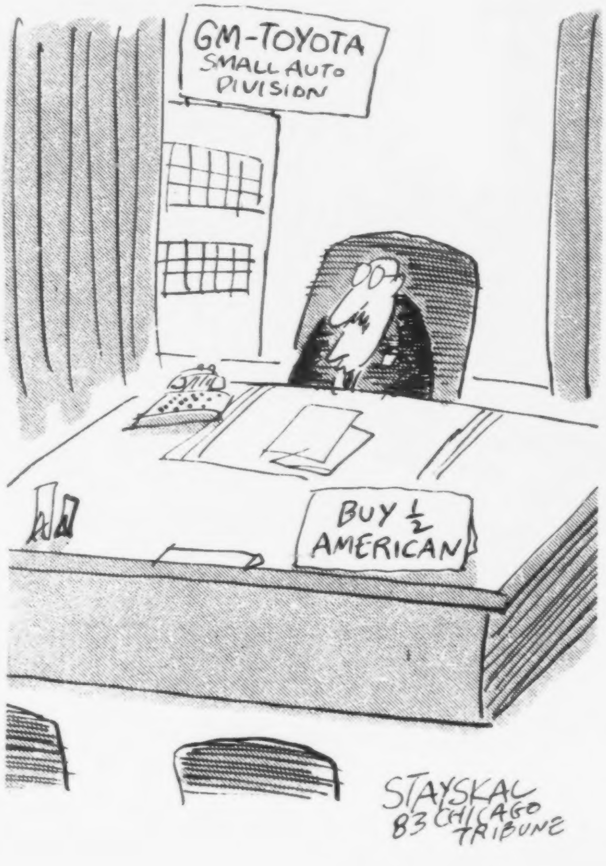
Where Opinion Is Changing

The most important trend of the last three or four years has come *not* from the ongoing, even intensifying, mood of the public, but from the changing outlook of American business executives. Since the 1981-1982 period, realization of the predicaments facing U.S. industry has spread to a wide array of companies, trade associations, national business organizations, and *ad hoc* coalitions assembled to sound the klaxon on trade issues. Not just the global migration of manufacturing from Pittsburgh, Detroit, and St. Louis, or the perils of an overvalued dollar, but also growing foreign barriers to U.S. service industries and the neomercantilist business-government collaboration rampant from Mexico City to Tokyo have caused the alarm.

From the steel, paper, and automobile-centered Basic Industry Coalition to the high-tech-organized Committee for International Trade Equity (CITE), a whole list of alphabet organizations has sprung up to call for action on the trade front. And as profiled in table 3, a number of different surveys show business executives endorsing a new array of activist policies and programs to restore American competitiveness.

Not surprisingly, with labor, the public, and now business aroused over trade, Congress is also rising to the issue. Yet the larger question is whether the political equation has shifted enough to compel a major new approach to trade policy, and that's not clear. A full half century has passed since trade—the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930—was last a major election issue. That was when old-style protectionism lost its domination of U.S. politics. Thereafter, protectionism ebbed, especially following World War II when U.S. economic hegemony made free trade an American interest and established a new bipartisan consensus in the process.

That consensus began to weaken during the seventies, as protection for troubled industries moved into



the political arena. President Richard Nixon implemented import quotas for the textile industry as part of the "Southern Strategy" in his successful 1972 reelection bid. Eight years later, trade was a peripheral campaign matter again, when Republican contender Ronald Reagan criticized Democratic President Jimmy Carter's embargo on grain shipments to the Soviet Union and also profited from economic resentments in auto- and steel-producing areas. It appeared as a collateral issue in 1984, when Reagan made sharp gains in textile areas (abetted by White House import restraints), and consolidated strength in Michigan's "auto corridor" (aided by administration insistence on voluntary Japanese quotas on auto exports to the United States). He did lose ground in Minnesota's Iron Range and in steel-producing areas (Pennsylvania newspapers, in particular, featured negative analyses of the president's autumn 1984 compromise decision on steel imports).

All in all, though, it's fair to say that in 1984, the trade issue never gained much headway beyond troubled mining, steel, and heavy machinery-producing centers.That's partly because the larger economy seemed strong at the time, but also because President Reagan's *overall* nationalism disguised his administration's lack of trade vigor and economic nationalism. Summer and autumn 1984 polls showed that 60 to 70 percent of Americans believed Reagan and the GOP would do a better job on the general question of keeping America strong. And outside of a few import-sensitive locales, voters apparently believed that commitment also encompassed protecting America's economic competitiveness.

Of course, the Democrats never presented an effective 1984 alternative. Presidential nominee Walter Mondale, for one, began muting his originally tough trade policy in his spring primary bouts with New Politics rival Gary Hart. The latter, pursuing the free trade-minded Yuppie vote, implied that Mondale was a captive of organized labor. By Election Day, there was little left of Mondale's earlier rhetorical concern that American workers would wind up sweeping around Japanese machines. Except in a few depressed areas, blue-collar workers swung to Reagan, while the major West Coast free-trade and import centers—the suburbs and Yuppie precincts of San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle—gave Mondale more support than they had given Jimmy Carter four years earlier. Marin County, California, America's archetypal hot-tub and Datsun/Volvo suburbia, actually swung from backing *Reagan* in 1980 to endorsing Mondale in 1984.

Because Reagan had the nationalist image, he also had the bulk of the nationalist electorate—not least the "Strong America" Democratic swing voters. November exit polling in labor areas by the Democratic survey firm of Fingerhut/Granados Opinion Research found that of the Democrats who voted for Reagan, 84 percent felt "business, labor, and government should do more cooperative planning to solve problems of foreign competition," and 83 percent said their vote was *not* a mandate for "allowing more subsidized foreign imports into the United States."

So far in 1985, Reagan's policies cannot have reassured this portion of his electoral constituency. Indeed, the import surge is now larger than ever, and early 1985 Louis Harris/*Business Week* polling found that the public disapproved of the president's letting the Japanese terminate their voluntary restraints. What's more, Harris also found that by three to two, Americans characterized the president's handling of U.S. trade with Japan as "only fair" or "poor." Pollster George Gallup, Jr., in analyzing his own April data showing a Reagan job-approval decline, cited the trade issue as one factor.

Protectionism and Politics

This brings us to the question of practical 1985-1986 politics. *Both* parties are out of sync with the public on the trade issue, given the influence of their free-trade elites. Rank-and-file opinion is stalwart: A 1983 Penn + Schoen poll found that 70 percent of Democrats and 61 percent of Republicans said they would be *more* likely rather than *less* likely to vote for a presidential candidate who advocated high tariffs.

Indeed, survey after survey illustrates 60-70 percent Democratic voter commitment to protecting American jobs and industries. That support, however, is generally acknowledged. What's less widely appreciated is the very similar trade orientation of grass-roots GOP voters as shown in table 2. In each poll, rank-and-file majorities were registered *against* the Reagan administration point of view.

Table 2
PARTY RANK-AND-FILE SUPPORT OF PROTECTION/ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

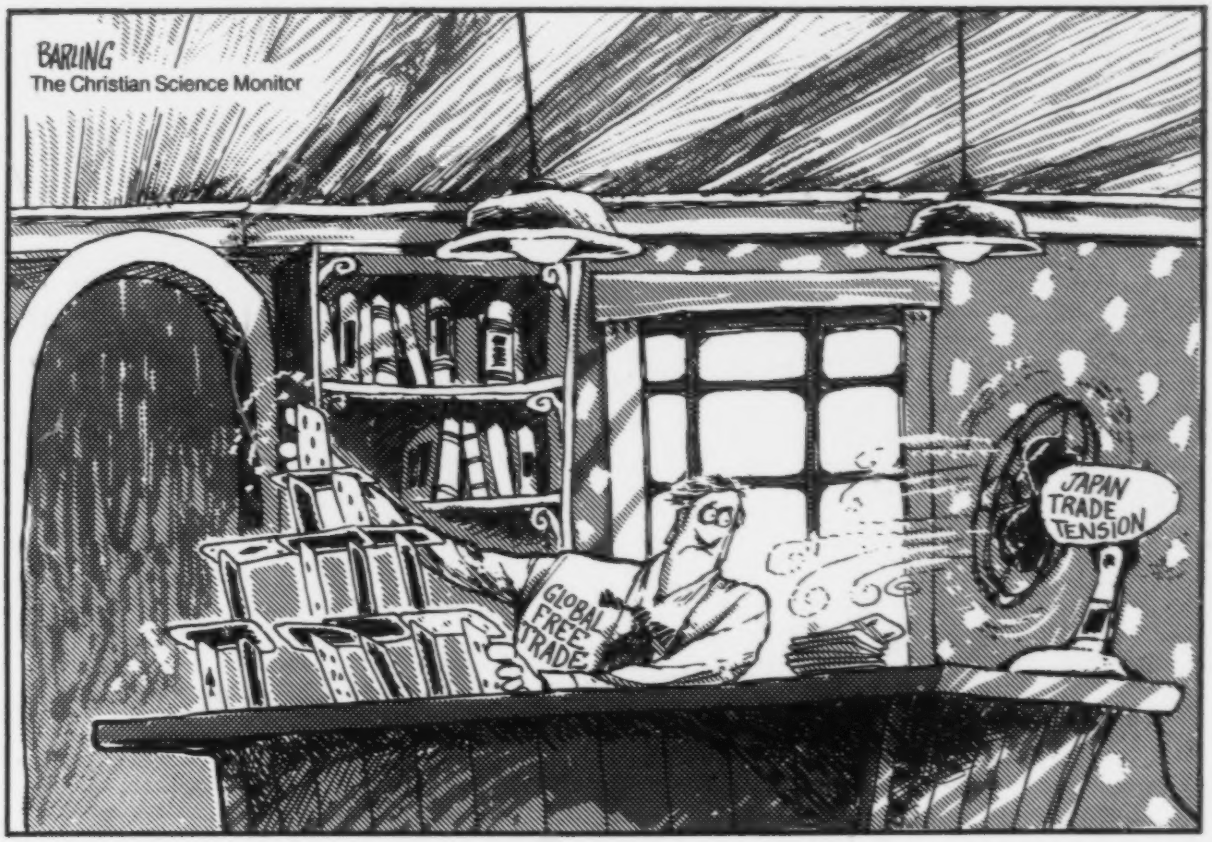
	Garth 2/83	***L.A. Times*** **2/84**	**Roper 11/84**	**Roper 11/84**	***USA TODAY*** **4/85**
	Domestic content law for foreign cars sold in U.S.	Restrict foreign imports to protect U.S. industry and jobs	Keep limit on Japanese cars imported into U.S.	Restrict imports priced lower than U.S. goods	Protect U.S. industry and jobs by tariffs and quotas as opposed to encouraging free trade
Democrats favoring	78%	68%	71%	70%	64%
Republicans favoring	72	62	70	59	50

The potential political importance lies in the extent to which rank-and-file Republicans—not just voters, but also major elements of the business community—favor a more activist and aggressive trade and competitiveness strategy than the Reagan administration seems prepared to deliver. Hopeful White House talk about new trade negotiations is understandable, but when major allies (French President Mitterrand at May's summit) are uncooperative in even setting a date or where they simply rely on cultural pattern-based protectionism (Japan), pressure for a more aggressive U.S. approach can only grow.

Unfortunately, President Reagan has already ignored some good advice from people he specifically commissioned to provide it. Late in 1984, the President's Task Force on International Private Enterprise, headed by Dwayne Andreas, chief executive officer of Archer-Daniels-Midland, made its recommendations. Citing the pressure of unfairly subsidized foreign exports, it suggested expansion of the U.S. Export-Import Bank and creation of a White House Economic Security Council to parallel the geopolitical responsibility of the existing National Security Council. And earlier this year the President's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness, chaired by Hewlett-Packard president John Young, called for a lengthy list of competitiveness measures on the federal level, including the creation of new departments of International Trade and Industry and Science and Technology. Neither report drew much response from the White House.

More emphatically, in a recent interview with the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, Senate International Trade Subcommittee Chairman Danforth of Missouri expressed his own "dissatisfaction with a very ideological view of trade within the administration. The administration equates even enforcement of the law as protectionist. They view free trade as [necessitating] docile acceptance of the unfair practices of trading partners." Partly in consequence, Senators Danforth, Chafee, Heinz, and other senior Republicans are pushing legislation that would either impose a temporary surcharge on Japanese imports to the U.S. or block imports of Japanese telecommunications equipment until Japan opens its markets to American goods.

Not a few experts agree that this may, in fact, be necessary. One of the leading U.S. international banks, Morgan Guaranty Trust, has called for a targeted surcharge on U.S. imports from Japan: "A substantial targeted surcharge, with standby authority for a still higher levy, could play a highly constructive bargaining role in opening up Japan's sheltering markets" (*World Financial Markets*, March-April). In a winter speech to the National Foreign Trade Council, First Boston Corporation chief economist Albert Wojnilower cited "import quotas and tariffs (including oil import fees)" as the only way to lower the budget deficit quickly and meaningfully without a recession. Harvard Professor Ezra Vogel, author of *Japan as Number One*, recently suggested that a "measured response" by the United States in selectively denying market access to



Part A

Table 3

Business Executives' Opinions on Proposals to Spur U.S. Trade Competitiveness

	Opinion Research Corp. 1983	**Harris/ Business Week 1982-1983**	**Kane, Parsons Inc. 1982***
Negotiate with Japan for a stable exchange rate between the dollar and the yen	89%	—	—
Pressure foreign governments to open their markets to imports	88	—	—
Strengthen GATT to settle disputes	85	—	—
Increase incentives to retrain workers	76	—	—
Allow private joint-venture research	73	—	—
Increase the funding of the Export-Import Bank	70	—	—
Adopt trade reciprocity posture	—	90%	85%
Provide greater incentives to American industry to export to Japan or eliminate disincentives to export	—	—	81
Revitalize U.S. industries through domestic economic or tax policies to achieve higher productivity and make our products internationally competitive	—	—	92
Amend Foreign Corrupt Practices Act to allow payments to foreign officials to speed up or unblock routine government actions	—	65	—

*Taken for Japanese Automobile Manufacturers Association.

Part B

Service Industry Chief Executives' Opinions on Proposals to Spur U.S. Trade in Services

	Would Have Slight or Significant Positive Effect	**Would Have No Effect**	**Would Be Counterproductive**
Negotiation of bilateral agreements on services with trading partners	87%	5%	8%
Amendment of Foreign Corrupt Practices Act to clarify accounting and anti-bribery provisions	74	21	5
Creation of a multilateral framework for trade in services under GATT	72	25	3
Creation of a Cabinet-level Department of Trade as proposed by the administration	71	24	8
Simplification of export licensing requirements	68	32	0
Reciprocity legislation requiring U.S. regulators to take into account a foreign country's treatment of U.S. service suppliers in licensing or regulating business from that country	65	15	20
Utilization of subsidies and incentives to encourage service exports	61	24	15
Legislation to sharpen application of existing U.S. trade remedies (i.e. Section 301 of 1974 Trade Act) to services	59	29	12
Authorization for President to establish terms and conditions under which foreign service firms may engage in interstate commerce in the United States upon a determination that a foreign country discriminates against U.S. service companies	56	25	18

Source: Survey of major service industry CEOS published in *Business Views on International Trade in Services*, by Price Waterhouse (1983).

Part C

Proposals Favored by Business Executives to Help Improve U.S. Productivity and Global Competitiveness

	Total Executives	**Market-Forces Executives**	**Industrial Policy Executives**
Increased government spending:			
Incentives to retrain workers	76%	72%	80%
Scientific and technological research	68	63	76
Science and engineering education	66	60	77
Loans and tax credits for ventures with strong export potential	55	50	64
Regulatory reform:			
Allow private joint-venture research	73	69	79
Allow tax write-offs for investment in small companies	68	68	69
Allow use of pension funds for high-tech venture capital	55	53	56
Newly created entities and procedures:			
National development corporation to help modernize basic industries	54	49	63
Labor-management negotiations, with federal incentives, to revitalize basic industries	54	49	62
Cabinet-level trade department	52	51	55
Cabinet-level science and technology department	49	45	57
Federal planning agency for long-term economic forecasting in advisory capacity	49	44	57

Note: Based on 523 interviews with top and mid-level executives (329 market-forces executives; 192 industrial policy executives) in Fortune 500 manufacturing firms and in the 50 largest companies in banking utilities, transportation, merchandising, life insurance, and diversified finance.
Source: Adapted from Opinion Research Corporation, Executive Caravan Management Profile, Summer 1983.

Japanese companies—"let's call it bargaining power"—may be necessary to open Japanese markets. UCLA Management School Professors of Strategic Studies Robert Sprinch and Bill McKelvey have argued that an effective strategic bargaining posture toward the Japanese might well involve selective U.S. product embargoes (on upper price-range Japanese cars, for example) and application of local content laws. And both Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca and Michael Czinkota, director of Washington's National Center for Export-Import Studies, have proposed that Japan be obligated to agree to steady yearly reductions in its trade deficit with the United States. No talk would count—only dollar results. As Iacocca puts it, "What we should do is have both countries sit down together and agree on gradual goals to bring the deficit down, such as to $35 billion one year and $32 billion the next. Then let the Japanese decide the best way to get to the goal. The choice should be theirs."

Insufficient attention has been paid to the way the U.S. competitiveness crisis has also galvanized American businessmen to support a new economic involvement on the part of the federal government. True, executives oppose the tariff approach or domestic content laws, but otherwise they're more activist. Back in late 1983, New Jersey-based Opinion Research Corporation asked a cross-section of executives from major companies whether they favored a Washington-based industrial policy *or* a less interventionist, market-forces approach. By 63 to 37 percent, they preferred the market-forces approach. But more detailed questioning promptly turned up some surprising numbers: *Market-oriented businessmen were almost as likely as industrial-policy backers to favor a wide range of new federal pro-industrial involvement in the economy.* Table 3 shows the details, as well as some other dimensions of business executive opinion on the trade issue. Even CEOs of service companies—banks, insurance companies, airlines—favor a new government assertiveness and commitment to reciprocity (rather than unilateral U.S. open-market policies).

What's Ahead for the Administration

For all of these reasons—surging imports (and import pressures), public opinion, growing business executive demand for action, and an aroused Congress—it's hard to see how U.S. trade policy can avoid toughening in 1985-1986. Yet there's also no doubt that the whole subject of increased federal strategic involvement on behalf of export finance, currency alignments, tax incentives for U.S. international corporate competition, and industry-by-industry access to U.S. markets is anathema to an administration that boasts free-market and diminished-government convictions verging on quasi-religious doctrine. The Reagan administration has been so anxious to roll back the economic role of government that it has been unwilling to coordinate the policies it would have preferred to leave to the marketplace. This neglect has been a factor in the 1984-1985 deficit/dollar/import crisis. In addition, the supply-side (tax-cutting) faction among the Reaganites has long believed that the great U.S. depression of the 1930s was substantially caused by Congress's spring 1930 passage of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff. Coolidge-era tax cuts, financial speculation, and income maldistribution (all somewhat replicated today) were not responsible, they say: *Trade restraints did it.* This is an exaggeration—industrial production was eroding rapidly in the United States in late 1929, long before enactment of Smoot-Hawley—but it has become a theology in some circles. Smoot-Hawley has become almost a no-trade-restraint cliché for open-market advocates. Ideological recalcitrance toward a new government trade role is obvious—starting right in the Oval Office.

Thus, it may be difficult for the administration to pursue tough new trade or pro-industrial strategies during the 1985-1986 period. If they do, they will offend free-marketers, supply-siders, and libertarians (the sort who cannot describe business advocates like Lee Iacocca without the adjective "corporatist"). But if they don't, they will offend important elements of the business community, pragmatic Republicans on Capitol Hill, and a large, less ideological element of the party rank-and-file. Ordinary voters, too, could be driven away if the heavy volume of imports—and corollary weakness among U.S. manufacturers—does help bring about another recession.

That brings us back to whether U.S. trade problems are part of a series of economic policy miscalculations—from the deficit to the overvalued dollar—that could cut short recovery and bring back recession. Much of the political intensity of the trade issue in 1985-1986 will depend on whether (and to what extent) the 1985-1986 import surge helps bring a new economic downturn. If there's no recession by November 1986, the larger indictment of administration economic policy will fail, and while the trade issue could be significant in some parts of the country, it would be unimportant in most others. Should a recession develop, however, with imports and foreign competition simultaneously drawing off U.S. consumer spending into overseas economies and wallets while beleaguered American industries prune their work forces or shut their doors, then the Reagan administration's nonchalance on the trade, dollar overvaluation, and competitiveness issues could come home to roost for dozens of Republican senators and congressmen in the 1986 elections. In 1986 as in 1982, the GOP could lose heavily in depressed areas, and the "economic nationalist" swing Democrats who voted for Ronald Reagan in 1984 could be among the first voters to backslide.

Indeed, if the trade issue gathers force through 1986 and carries over into the 1987-1988 election cycle, then it could even have a major regional and economic impact on presidential voting patterns, but that's another story. ☑

by Sidney Verba and Gary Orren

Rendering What's Due: Views on Income Equality

New issues have sparked more controversy or held more sway over the course of history than has equality. The demand for equality has been the epicenter of the major upheavals that have erupted on the American scene. And the fight goes on.

Equality remains at the heart of policy making and political struggles today. The public agenda in 1984, for example, brimmed with equality issues: debates over the role of blacks and women, disagreements over who should shoulder what share of the tax burden, charges of unfairness hurled at one political party, countercharges that special interests wielded too much influence hurled at the other party.

In this recurring battle the combatants often talk past one another, for the equality ideal is among the most elusive. It has many, often contradictory meanings, and it is not one issue, but a complex of issues. In the United States, a country seen as uniquely egalitarian by some and as the paragon of inequality by others, this ambiguity is particularly intriguing. To try to understand this complexity more fully, we have studied the attitudes of American leaders toward equality: what do they mean by it; how much equality do they want; how do economic, political, gender, and racial equality clash with each other? Of all these, the economic sphere is perhaps most crucial. What do Americans believe about distributions of income?

Americans are not levelers. Almost all agree—and have for several decades—that some income variation is both desirable and appropriate and that income should be based upon skill and effort. Even the great social reform movements of the century—the New Deal and the Great Society—have been chary of redistributive schemes. The consensus against an income ceiling, present since the 1930s, is even greater now.[1] What is less clear is how high the public would like the floor to be.

In 1964, 31 percent of Americans thought that the government should see to it "that every person has a job and a good standard of living," a belief shared by only 17 percent of the public in 1978.[2] Yet a "good" standard of living lies well beyond "adequate" or "minimal"; it is therefore likely that even in 1978 a sizable percentage of the population favored some kind of income floor. Indeed, when the Reagan administration took office in 1981, though they proposed to cut spending on social programs substantially, they also promised to provide a safety net for the truly needy.

Americans' general opposition to radical income redistribution and their support of some government protection for the least well-off define the outer boundaries of income equality. Within those boundaries, however, there is considerable disagreement. Most concur that income differences across occupations are legitimate. The dispute involves how much income inequality there actually is in the United States, how much there ought to be, and how to rank occupations in terms of earnings.

To find out more precisely how much income inequality Americans think is just, we surveyed a substantial sample of leaders from varied segments of American society. We chose leaders rather than average citizens because they set the terms of public debate and because they play a significant role in determining public policy on incomes. Furthermore, some of the leaders we studied—top executives—play a direct role in establishing the size of the income gap between those at the top and those at the bottom, since the top incomes in business are set by what they consider proper. The values of such leaders—values, as we shall see, that are not shared by others—shape the actual distribution of income in America.

The leaders we surveyed included top executives

This article was adapted from *Equality in America: The View from the Top* by Sidney Verba and Gary R. Orren, published this year by Harvard University Press.

and top labor leaders as well as leaders of the major farm organizations. We also surveyed leaders of civil rights and feminist organizations, in order to sample groups that challenge the system. And we included intellectuals, leaders of both political parties, leaders from the media, and a sample of future leaders—students at prestigious colleges. The leaders' views, in fact, encompass the full range of American opinion that is not beyond the fringe.[3]

We simply asked the leaders what the "average annual earnings before taxes" actually are for people in different occupations and then asked what these earnings should be. By presenting a wide variety of occupations, it is possible to see how large these leaders think the income gap should be that separates occupations near the top of the income scale from those near the bottom. The list included both public and private jobs, as well as white- and blue-collar workers. The occupational categories are precise enough that the actual income variation within each cannot be great. The question is about earnings before taxes.[4]

The leaders' perceptions of earnings were fairly close to actual salaries for the occupations. But their notions of actual earnings differed from what they thought earnings *should* be (see table 1). In general, they do not see the present income distribution as entirely fair. They want to slash earnings at the top of the hierarchy and boost earnings at the bottom. Corporate executives are, on average, perceived to earn almost twice what they ought to, and professional athletes are thought to earn *more* than twice what is proper. Doctors, in the upper reaches of the income hierarchy, and plumbers, in the middle, should also lose income, according to the leaders' prevailing views. Those who should be paid more are people who work in the public and nonprofit sectors, cabinet secretaries, teachers, policemen, college professors, and the two lowest-paid occupations, the bank teller and the elevator operator.

Table 1

PERCEIVED AND FAIR INCOME OF OCCUPATIONS

Occupation	Perceived income	Fair income	Difference
Top executive	$167,070	$95,230	71,840
Professional athlete	112,703	42,612	70,091
Doctor	74,374	52,798	21,576
Cabinet secretary	48,062	48,119	+ 57
Engineer	24,916	24,705	211
Professor	20,268	22,766	+ 2,498
Plumber	18,845	15,575	3,270
Automobile worker	12,102	12,045	57
Police officer	12,012	14,385	+ 2,373
Teacher	10,474	12,812	+ 2,338
Bank teller	9,083	10,454	+ 1,371
Elevator operator	6,877	7,954	+ 1,077

Note: Logged income is reported in this table and those following. The figures are averages for all the leaders.

Since these data are averaged for all leaders, they mask wide differences of opinion about how much the earnings of a particular occupation should be raised or lowered. To compare the changes in income that groups would favor, we used the ratio between proposed (fair) and perceived earnings, or the "ought/is" ratio. If all members of a group agree that income for an occupation should stay the same, the average ratio is one. If 50 percent of a group wants to double earnings, and 50 percent wants to cut them in half, the ratio is also one. If all group members want to increase an occupation's earnings by 50 percent, the ratio is 1.5. If they wish to triple earnings, the ratio is three. If all group members want an occupation to earn one-third of what it does, the ratio is .33.

The leadership groups differ on the fairness of current earnings at the top and bottom of the hierarchy, as shown by their attitudes toward the incomes of business executives and elevator operators (see table 2). On balance, all groups except business would slightly raise the income of the elevator operator. The ought/is ratio for this occupation is highest among the feminists, both because their estimate of the elevator operator's earnings is the lowest, and because they desire a higher income for the occupation. The other groups vary a good deal. Business and Republicans consider the elevator operator's earnings roughly appropriate, while labor and blacks would raise these earnings more than most other groups, by about 25 percent.

Table 2

PERCEIVED AND FAIR INCOME OF TOP AND BOTTOM OCCUPATIONS

Group	Elevator operator			Executive		
	Perceived income	Fair income	Fair/perceived ratio	Perceived income	Fair income	Fair/perceived ratio
Business	$7,137	$6,990	0.98	$199,295	$187,314	0.94
Farm	7,096	7,643	1.08	138,325	87,855	0.63
Labor	6,959	8,627	1.25	173,907	90,612	0.51
Intellectuals	7,101	8,261	1.16	189,151	94,741	0.50
Media	7,124	7,861	1.10	179,410	107,322	0.60
Republicans	6,969	7,201	1.03	164,776	130,223	0.81
Democrats	7,008	8,209	1.18	181,754	99,484	0.56
Blacks	6,739	8,121	1.21	130,074	79,761	0.61
Feminists	6,197	8,527	1.37	172,128	69,650	0.41
Youth	6,794	8,026	1.18	152,168	70,615	0.47

Note: The figures are averages for each group.

Bringing the Top Down

When it comes to top business executives, all of the groups opt for reductions in earnings that are more substantial than the suggested increases for the lowest-paying occupation. Variations among the groups, however, are sizable. Business, at one extreme, would reduce executives' earnings only a little, apparently considering them just. And within this group, the national business leaders, themselves top executives of major corporations, do not regard their own earnings as any greater than they should be.

The other leadership groups seem to have no qualms about cutting those earnings. Again feminists are at the opposite pole from business, reducing executive earnings by more than half. Labor, intellectuals, and youth also support substantial cuts.

The two political parties paralleled one another, though Democrats would take more drastic measures. Each would boost the elevator operator's pay, but the Democrats would raise it much more than the Republicans would. Each would cut the executive's salary, but the Democrats would cut it much more.

Attitudes toward the incomes at these two occupational extremes of executive and elevator operator reveal a number of beliefs about income differentials in general. First, there is a general desire to see a smaller gap between the top and the bottom of the income scale. All groups except one would raise the income of the elevator operator and lower that of the executive. Second, groups differ widely on how much smaller the gap should be. Business and, to a lesser extent, Republicans consider the boundaries of the current earnings gap to be equitable. Feminists and, to a lesser extent, labor and intellectuals consider the earnings gap the most unfair. Third, despite differences among the groups on the extent to which earnings ought to be changed, no group would eliminate the income gap. And finally, the common ideal is to equalize income by lowering the ceiling rather than raising the floor. Executive income is in general reduced—in absolute and relative terms—more than an elevator operator's is raised. The asymmetry is most apparent among intellectuals and youth, who would lower executive salaries substantially but would raise the elevator operator's earnings only marginally.

The Income Gap

The size of the income gap that Americans accept as legitimate is shown more clearly in their attitudes toward two contrasting pairs of occupations, an executive vis-à-vis an automobile worker and an executive vis-à-vis an elevator operator (see table 3). The comparison between the head of a major corporation and an ordinary worker represents a typical disparity of income found within a large organization. The comparison between the executive and an elevator operator reflects the largest income gap found within the hierarchy of earnings in our data. These ratios relate what an executive is perceived to earn to what an auto worker or elevator operator is perceived to earn and what an executive ought to earn to what an auto worker or elevator operator ought to earn.

Table 3

PERCEIVED AND FAIR INCOME RATIOS FOR HIGH AND LOW EARNERS BY GROUPS

	Executive vs. auto worker		Executive vs. elevator operator	
Group	Perceived (real/real)	Fair (ideal/ideal)	Perceived (real/real)	Fair (ideal/ideal)
Business	15.1	15.6	27.9	26.9
Farm	11.1	7.9	19.4	11.7
Labor	14.8	7.2	24.9	10.6
Intellectuals	15.1	7.9	26.6	11.4
Media	14.1	8.7	25.1	13.6
Republicans	13.2	11.3	23.6	18.0
Democrats	15.4	8.2	26.0	12.1
Blacks	10.8	6.4	19.1	9.7
Feminists	15.2	5.7	27.5	8.2
Youth	13.4	6.0	22.6	8.9

Note: Figures are averages for each group.

In general, all groups agree that there is a substantial and consistent income gap between an executive and auto worker, though they consider different sized gaps fair. Business, at the high end, favors an income ratio of 15.6 between the executive and the assembly line worker, while feminists, at the low end, prefer an income ratio of 5.7, about one-third that of business. The other groups favor earnings ratios of about 7 or 8, with the exception of Republicans, who prefer a ratio of 11.3. These ratios suggest how much inequality leaders think is justified and how much the leaders would change income differences. Business is the only group that prefers an income gap larger than that which it believes to exist. Feminists would reduce the income gap between two occupations to less than half what they perceive it to be; other fairly egalitarian-minded groups, such as labor, intellectuals, blacks, Democrats, and youth would cut the gap approximately in half.

Nevertheless, since each group, however egalitarian, considers a fairly substantial gap acceptable, their commitment to income equality is limited. This is reflected in the perceived and fair income ratios between the top business executive and the elevator operator. Groups vary in how big they perceive the gap to be. All groups agree that the gap is wide, and all groups would reduce it, but by different amounts. Business leaders would reduce the gap hardly at all. Other groups would narrow it significantly. Most of the more egalitarian groups would reduce the gap to about half what they perceive it to be; the feminists would reduce it to less than one-third. Most of the more egalitarian groups have ideal ratios ranging from 9 to 12, with feminists once again the lowest ratio, at 8.2. Thus, even groups critical of the current distribution of earnings display an ambivalent commitment to greater equality or, to put it differently, a strong belief in unequal rewards for unequal ability, effort, or marketability of skills. These groups would reduce the income gap, but they would leave substantially unequal earnings after the reduction.

Given that these groups cover a broad ideological spectrum, the unanimity with which they uphold wide disparities in income is striking. The lack of egalitarian impulse is all the more impressive considering that the question posed to the groups was a relatively easy test. Those who endorse a more equal income distribution in the abstract might be far less enamored of the idea if it entailed tough trade-offs, such as producing undesirable side effects or precluding other favorite goals, or if it were difficult or impossible to accomplish. Some leaders probably thought about these trade-offs, but the survey question did not explicitly raise them. Even though the leaders were not forced to weigh the possible costs of creating a more equal income hierarchy, they still expressed relatively little favor for the idea.

Only the most radical egalitarian would consider full income equality among all occupations fair or desirable. A society that is more egalitarian than America, however—but hardly so egalitarian as to make comparisons silly—provides corroboration that much smaller earnings ratios are realistic. In Sweden, similar leadership groups have ratios much smaller than the ones reported for the more liberal groups in the United States, in the two to three range rather than the nine to twelve range. Indeed, even the least egalitarian leaders in Sweden, top business leaders, are considerably more egalitarian not only than their business counterparts in the United States (endorsing a proper earnings ratio between a top and bottom earner of five to one compared to twenty-six to one in the United States) but also than the most liberal groups in the United States.[3]

Leaders' Own Income

American leaders' own earnings can be placed on the earnings hierarchy alongside the earnings of various occupations. The leaders were asked what they believe "someone at your level in your own occupation" earns and ought to earn. The leaders' jobs vary. In business and the media the organizational position that qualifies the individual for inclusion in the leadership study is also that person's full-time occupation. In farm, labor, party, black, and feminist organizations, the organizational position may not be the leader's main job. Furthermore, the group of intellectuals took in a variety of occupations. These variations among leaders do not prevent them from placing themselves on an income hierarchy with other occupations. Where they place themselves on the scale of fair earnings reveals how much they feel justified earning in relation to other occupations.

We compare the leaders' report of what they earn and ought to earn with what they believe executives and elevator operators earn and ought to earn (see table 4). There are wide differences from group to group in the distance between what the leaders earn and what they believe an executive earns. There is remarkable agreement across the groups, however, in the *desired* ratio between the two. Each group on average believes that an executive ought to earn about three and one-half times what the group members believe fair income for themselves. Business leaders deviate slightly from this, since many are themselves top executives.

Table 4

PERCEIVED AND FAIR INCOME RATIOS FOR SELF AND OTHERS BY GROUPS

	Executive vs. respondent		Respondent vs. elevator operator	
Group	Perceived (real/real)	Fair (ideal/ideal)	Perceived (real/real)	Fair (ideal/ideal)
Business	3.1	2.8	9.1	9.6
Farm	7.1	3.7	2.7	3.1
Labor	7.7	3.7	3.3	2.9
Intellectuals	8.3	3.6	3.2	3.2
Media	7.0	3.7	3.6	3.7
Republicans	5.4	3.8	4.4	4.7
Democrats	6.7	3.4	3.8	3.5
Blacks	6.7	3.5	2.9	2.8
Feminists	11.0	3.9	2.5	2.1

Note: Youth are omitted because a question on self-earnings was inappropriate. Figures are averages for each group.

This similarity across groups is all the more striking since it is based on a wide disparity in what groups believe executives ought to earn as well as in what they believe they should earn themselves. For example, labor and Republicans are almost identical in the ratio they regard as fair between their own earnings and those of an executive. They differ substantially, however, on the amount they think a leading executive ought to earn. Labor and Republicans can have similar ratios, despite the difference between their views on fair executive income, because labor has a lower average desired income for itself than do Republicans: labor averages $24,600; Republicans average $32,800. The groups also differ in the actual incomes they report: $22,400 and $30,100, respectively. Republicans and feminists offer an even clearer contrast. Both agree that top executives ought to earn about four times what they ought to earn themselves. But the feminist ratio for executive earning is .41, while the Republican ratio is .81. In other words, feminists want to cut executive salaries by twice as much as Republicans do.

The groups' position vis-à-vis the elevator operator varied in both the perceived and the desired ratios. The desired income ratios range from business, which believes it ought to earn nearly ten times what an unskilled worker earns, to feminists, who believe they ought to earn only twice as much. There are, however, two striking uniformities across the groups. All groups believe, regardless of occupation, that they should earn several times more than an unskilled worker. Furthermore, they all consider the gap that now separates them from the unskilled worker more or less correct.

Despite the wide divergence in the absolute amounts that the three positions—an executive, an elevator operator, and someone in one's own occupation—

are perceived to earn and the wider divergence in what they are thought to deserve, all groups wind up in a similar relative position in their ideal scheme of income distribution. All groups would consider it fair if the highest-paid individuals earned about three-and-a-half times what they themselves earn, and if, in turn, they themselves earned as many times the lowest income as they currently do. In other words, each group, wherever it stands in the income hierarchy, favors a uniform ceiling above it as a ratio to its own earnings, though absolute differences vary. Others can earn more, but only so many times more. This ceiling on earnings is consistent with the opposition of all groups to a top limit on income set by the government. The belief that a certain income is fair for an executive, and that anything higher is unfair, does not translate into an endorsement of a government-imposed ceiling. Nor do the leaders object to earning several times more than those at the bottom of the scale. Again the uniformity of the gap can best be understood as a ratio. The desired ratio of one's own earnings to the earnings floor varies across groups, but they agree that the existing ratio is about right.

Sources of Attitudes

What determines how much income a person thinks an occupation ought to earn? The answer is complex, but its contours can be briefly delineated. In part, the answer lies in the nature of the job being evaluated, in part in the nature of the person doing the evaluating.

For one thing, the amount that an occupation is perceived to earn is important in determining what people think it ought to earn. Despite some leadership groups' beliefs that some occupations earn much more or much less than they should, all groups would leave the rank order of income the same. Many groups believe, for example, that executive income is higher than it ought to be, but all agree that it ought to be higher than that of other occupations. The groups differ in the distances they would create between occupations, but the ordering remains consistent across groups, and is strikingly similar to the current perceived ranking. Furthermore, no group wants to elevate any occupation it sees as below it to a rank above. The groups would generally like to reduce the income gap by raising those below them and lowering those above them, but not by enough to alter the income hierarchy. American leaders want greater equality, but not at the cost of relinquishing their present rung on the ladder.

Where groups want to raise or lower the income of an occupation, need and merit appear to be the dominant criteria. In general, those at the bottom of the scale ought to earn more, and those whose income is out of line with their general level of respect or prestige should be brought into line.[6] It is the latter consideration that probably causes our leadership sample to believe that a teacher's salary ought to be raised above that of an automobile worker.

The characteristics of the people making the judgments also play a role in their evaluations of income. When it comes to those occupations that have traditionally formed the polarities of social and political conflict—executives and blue-collar workers, for instance—the attitudes that a person has about the proper income are closely related to his general political ideology. For other occupations—such as a sports star, whose class position is unclear—the way one views income is unrelated to more general political views. And one's own income, interestingly enough, is unrelated to the amount one thinks others should earn. It does have an effect on what *you* think *you* ought to earn—more, but not much more.

Why the United States Isn't Like Sweden

American attitudes toward a fair earnings distribution mesh well with their more general attitudes toward equality. The leaders agree that the gap between the top and bottom earners should be wide, but they differ on how wide. They agree that the top earner deserves about four times their own earnings, but since they earn radically different amounts, the result is a wide disparity in what would be a fair income for the top earner. Similarly, they accept as fair the existing ratio of their own earnings to the lowest-earning occupation, even though that ratio also varies widely, depending on their own income. And they agree that the ranking of occupations in terms of earnings is about what it ought to be. They share a belief that income ought to vary across occupations. They do not favor equality of result, yet there are substantial differences in what they consider an equitable income gap. Consequently, there are substantial disagreements over the fairness of the current distribution.

Attitudes toward the distribution of income make clear that Americans do not support radical egalitarianism. These findings confirm the general view of American political culture, and that is that the ideology of individual achievement remains potent. Since it is the leaders of this country who hold to these beliefs, sharp income differentiation is likely to remain central to American life.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Kay L. Schlozman and Sidney Verba, *Injury to Insult: Unemployment, Class, and Political Response* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 223; Guillermina Jasso and Peter H. Rossi, "Distributive Justice and Earned Income," *American Sociological Review* 42 (1977): 639-651; Lee Rainwater, *What Money Buys* (New York: Basic Books, 1974).

[2] Warren E. Miller, Arthur H. Miller, and Edward J. Schneider, *American National Election Studies Data Sourcebook, 1952-1978* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 172.

[3] For a full discussion of the sample of leaders as well as further data, see Sidney Verba and Gary R. Orren, *Equality in America: The View from the Top* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), Appendix A.

[4] The income data in this article are also based on logged data. The reasons for using pre-tax income and the methodological advantages of using logged data are discussed in *Equality in America*, Verba and Orren, pp. 182-184 and 314-318.

[5] A full comparison of data for the United States and Sweden will appear in Sidney Verba, Donald Ferree, Ikuo Kabashima, Steven Kelman, Ichiro Miyake, Gary Orren and Joji Watanuki, *Equality: A Comparative Perspective* (in progress).

[6] For evidence of the strong relationship between the amount each occupation should earn and the perceived prestige of these occupations, see Verba and Orren, *Equality in America*, pp. 173-176.

Lipset

(Continued from page 9)

stitutions taken as a group declined gradually from 49 percent to 43 percent between 1975 and early 1981. Then, as in the Harris and NORC surveys, Gallup reported that the mean level of confidence dropped during the Reagan recession, down to 40 percent in two polls taken late in 1981 and mid-summer 1983. Faith in institutions mounted in 1984 to an average of 43 percent in tandem with the economic recovery.

These results are generally similar to those found about the correlates of presidential popularity and electoral choice. That is, the approval ratings of presidents and their strengths in trial heat elections also vary with the indicators of economic performance. After a political and economic honeymoon during Ronald Reagan's first six months in office, the electorate turned gradually but steadily against him. His approval rating in the Gallup poll fell off from 60 percent in September 1981 to 41 percent in January 1983, the month in which the recession bottomed out. Walter Mondale moved ahead of him in presidential trial heats. But as the economy recovered in 1983-1984, Ronald Reagan's standing in the polls, including the definitive one, the election, went up.[12]

The Presidential Effect

Economic recovery clearly fostered a recovery of confidence, the most striking such development since the Vietnam War. And continued economic prosperity should continue to fuel an upswing in trust in major institutions.

Yet, as we have seen, the survey data findings do not permit the judgment that the period of malaise is at an end. The most recent (1984) Harris and Gallup polls indicate that the public distrust of the most powerful private institutions—major companies, organized labor, and the press—has changed only slightly if at all. As of the fall of 1984, confidence in the three is far below that of the others, much lower than in the mid-1960s in Harris, and somewhat lower than in the mid-1970s in Gallup. The two institutions that gained the most in public trust in the Harris surveys during the past two years have been the White House—from 20 percent to 42 percent—and Congress—from 13 to 28 percent. No other institution comes close to these two in improving its standing with the public, although all the others have improved their position. Gallup, of course, does not inquire about the presidency, and Congress improved its position only marginally in his October 1984 poll. Three other public institutions, however, the Supreme Court, the public schools, and the military, are the only ones to move up significantly in public esteem. Thus, in both Harris and Gallup, governmental institutions, albeit different ones, were the significant gainers in the confidence race in 1984. In any case, the findings of the three polls in 1983-1984 resemble those reported during the Reagan honeymoon upswing in 1981, which, as noted in *The Confidence Gap*, indicated "that the 'good feelings' surrounding the president . . . did not restore a *general* sense of confidence in other institutions."[13]

Shortly before taking office in 1981, Ronald Reagan expressed concern about the "steady decline in public confidence in business" in the public opinion polls, which he blamed on the "adversary relationship between the federal government and business" stimulated by his predecessor in the White House.[14]

Since Ronald Reagan has tried to carry out his ideological commitment to strengthen the private sector and weaken the governmental one, it is ironic that the president's successes in the economic and other areas have greatly increased faith in governmental institutions, while they have done little to reduce the high level of distrust of private power, particularly big business. This situation is especially noteworthy since in the polls taken from the mid-sixties to Reagan's assumption of office in 1981, "anti-government and anti-business sentiment grew virtually in tandem with one another. . . . There was no evidence during the 1970s that either institution was declining in public esteem while the other was growing. . . ."[15] But seemingly, by presiding over a striking improvement in economic conditions, which a sizable proportion of the public credits to "Reaganomics" and to new and better government policies, Ronald Reagan has helped to revive trust in government but not in business.

The increased disdain for the press, which fell in 1984 in both Harris and Gallup, is not surprising, however, since the polls have consistently indicated an inverse relationship between feelings about the press and the presidency. When one goes up, the other tends to go down. As Schneider and I noted in *The Confidence Gap*, the "modest but noticeable see-saw relationship between 'the executive branch' and 'the press' suggests that the public has become conscious of a kind of adversary relationship between the two."[16]

The recent opinion surveys demonstrate that what can go down can also go up. Logically, if bad political or economic news undermines faith in institutions, good news should be restorative. Yet the revival is far from complete. As of November 1984, the average level of high confidence in the leadership of the ten institutions that have been included in the Harris and NORC surveys taken since 1966 was 31 percent, well below the 48 percent registered in 1966 and even under the average of 33 percent found in three polls taken during the Watergate years, 1973-1974. The only institution whose recent standing is comparable to what it held in 1966 is the White House. All the others, particularly major companies and organized labor, are much lower. And while the average Gallup confidence rating for seven institutions moved up by three points from 1983 to 1984, the rate was still 6 percent below 1975.

---

[12] S. M. Lipset, "The Economy, Elections, and Public Opinion," *The Tocqueville Review*, 5 (Fall-Winter, 1983), pp. 431-471; "The Elections, The Economy and Public Opinion: 1984," *PS*, 28 (Winter 1985), pp. 28-30; Scott Keefe, "Public Opinion in 1984," in M. M. Pomper, ed. *The Election of 1984*, p. 94.

[13] Lipset and Schneider, *The Confidence Gap*, p. 59.

[14] Ronald Reagan, "Government and Business in the '80s," *Wall Street Journal*, January 9, 1981, p. 18.

[15] Lipset and Schneider, *The Confidence Gap*, p. 163.

[16] Lipset and Schneider, *The Confidence Gap*, p. 55.

Lack of Conviction

The evidence that the American public likes its president, and as a result has gained confidence in the presidency as an institution, while remaining suspicious about others, is not limited to the confidence area. Ronald Reagan's popularity has also not been transferable with respect to influencing the public's views on most issues, a conclusion that has been noted by Republican leaders aware of the findings to that effect in the opinion polls. In September 1983, after Reagan had held office for 20 months, Senator Paul Laxalt, a close friend of the president and the chairman of the Republican National Committee, noted "the strange phenomenon" that most Americans express approval of Ronald Reagan, although they are opposed to much of what he supports. As Laxalt pointed out: "People have deep differences with his policies. But they still have trust in him. . . ."[17] And with specific reference to the president's activist foreign policy, Richard Lugar, the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, emphasized in January 1985 that "in poll after poll . . . Americans display an . . . overwhelming opposition to any course of action which might actually frustrate governments which are harmful to us."[18] Most Americans remain more liberal than the president on economic, defense, foreign policy, and social questions.[19]

Given these findings, there is good reason to conclude that the confidence gap still exists. Most Americans remain suspicious of their leaders and of the way their institutions are performing. Good times presided over by a president who is upbeat about the country and its institutions, and who continually voices his faith in American institutions, have helped to increase the level of confidence, but it is a change in mood linked to economic effectiveness and presidential performance, not to a sustained conviction that all is well.

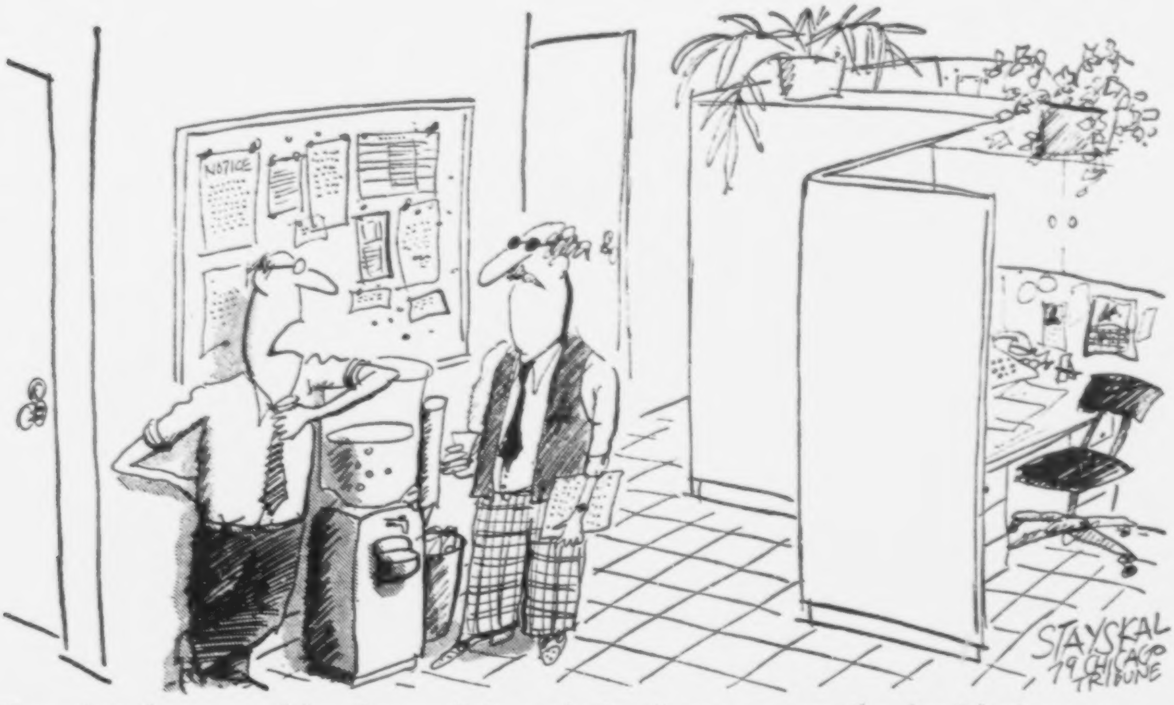
These conclusions are reinforced by the results of another set of questions asked by various polling organizations, that are designed to estimate the level of

---

[17] Jack Nelson, "Despite High Popularity, Reagan Faces Tough Race," *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 1983, p. 1.

[18] Bernard Gwertzman, "Senate Unit Chief Seeks Consensus on Foreign Policy," *New York Times*, January 24, 1985, pp. 1, 8.

[19] Lipset, "The Elections, The Economy, . . .," pp. 28-38.



"I used to be swayed by the media's analysis of every move the President made . . . but not any more. Now I wait for the polls!'

Reprinted by permission Tribune Media Services.

alienation among Americans. The Harris survey has been tracking these items for a longer period than others. And, as with other measures of public trust, Harris finds the situation improving, but far from what it was in the mid-1960s.

Who's Not To Blame

After reviewing the evidence concerning the fall-off in trust in the sixties and seventies, Schneider and I concluded that the economic interpretation was insufficient. We suggested as a more general explanation the increase from the mid-sixties on of "bad news," much of it non-economic in nature until the end of the Watergate era. From then until 1983, the bad news was largely economic. And we stressed that the press is inherently predisposed to stress bad news, that disasters, troubles, problems, are news. The advent of television has given media reporting of the news more power to affect the public mood than ever before. And research evidence indicates that those who watch television news regularly are more cynical than others.

The media, of course, have not changed their behavior during the Reagan era. Although the economic news has been good since early 1983, much continues to happen that may reinforce the anxieties many Americans have about their institutions. Meg Greenfield, serving on a committee for the 1985 Pulitzer Prize press awards, notes that the hundreds of stories she has read from every part of the country focus on bad news, "the maltreatment of the powerless, the corruption of the establishment, the feebleness and decay of institutions. . . . [T]he world according to journalism is . . . a surprisingly bleak place."[20] Ms. Greenfield rejects, as Schneider and I did earlier, the assumption that this emphasis is largely a reflection of a liberal press bias. She stresses the desire of journalists to find exposés, to get the story behind the official report. There is a story in reporting the "failure of various public programs and institutions"; the version that they are successful is public relations.

The media cannot be held primarily responsible for the emergence and continuation of the confidence gap, much as they cannot be credited for the positive feelings that characterized American reactions to their institutions and leaders prior to the mid-sixties. In 1965, just before American military intervention in Vietnam, Robert Lane analyzed the changes in public attitudes toward American social and political institutions from the late 1930s—when scientific polling began—through the early 1960s. He found that from a relatively low state during the 1930s at the bottom of the Great Depression, Americans became increasingly affirmative about their society until by 1965 the majority was giving consistently positive evaluations to the pollsters.[21] Clearly, favorable developments, particularly long-term prosperity, overcame the depression-born malaise. And it will require another such prolonged happy period to reduce the suspicion many Americans still have in the mid-eighties about the way their institutions function.

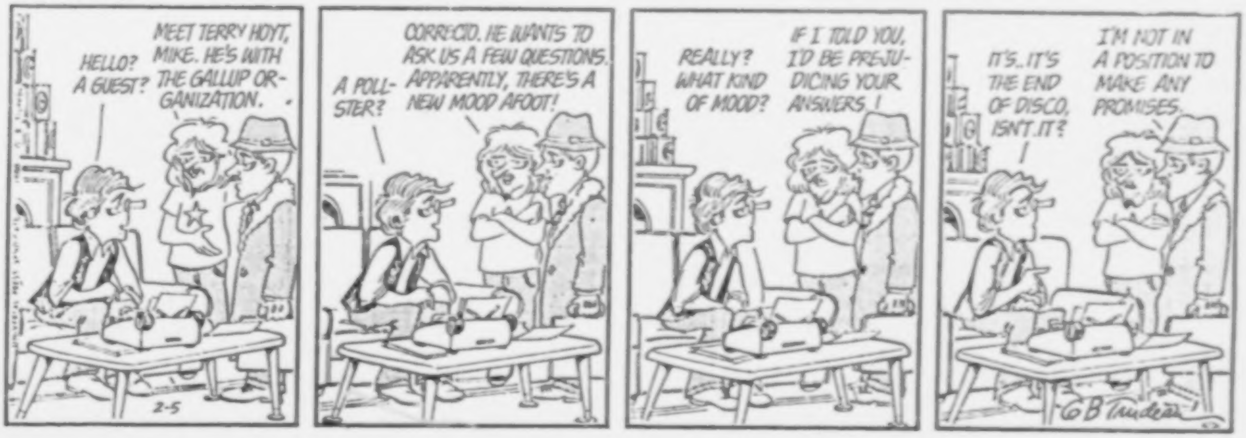
---

[20] Meg Greenfield, "Why We're Still Muckraking," *Newsweek*, 105 (March 25, 1985), p. 94.

[21] Robert E. Lane, "The Politics of Consensus in the Age of Affluence," *American Political Science Review*, 59 (December 1965), pp. 874-75; and "The Decline of Politics and Ideology in a Knowledgeable Society," *American Sociological Review*, 31 (October 1966), pp. 649-62.

This paper was prepared for the Fifth Annual Conald S. MacNaughton Symposium sponsored by Syracuse University.

Doonesbury


HELLO? A GUEST?
MEET TERRY HOYT, MIKE. HE'S WITH THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION.
2-5
A POLLSTER?
CORRECTO. HE WANTS TO ASK US A FEW QUESTIONS. APPARENTLY, THERE'S A NEW MOOD AFOOT!
REALLY? WHAT KIND OF MOOD?
IF I TOLD YOU, I'D BE PREJUDICING YOUR ANSWERS!
IT'S..IT'S THE END OF DISCO, ISN'T IT?
I'M NOT IN A POSITION TO MAKE ANY PROMISES.
GB Trudeau

Copyright, 1980, G. B. Trudeau. Reprinted with permission of Universal Press Syndicate. All rights reserved.

$5.00

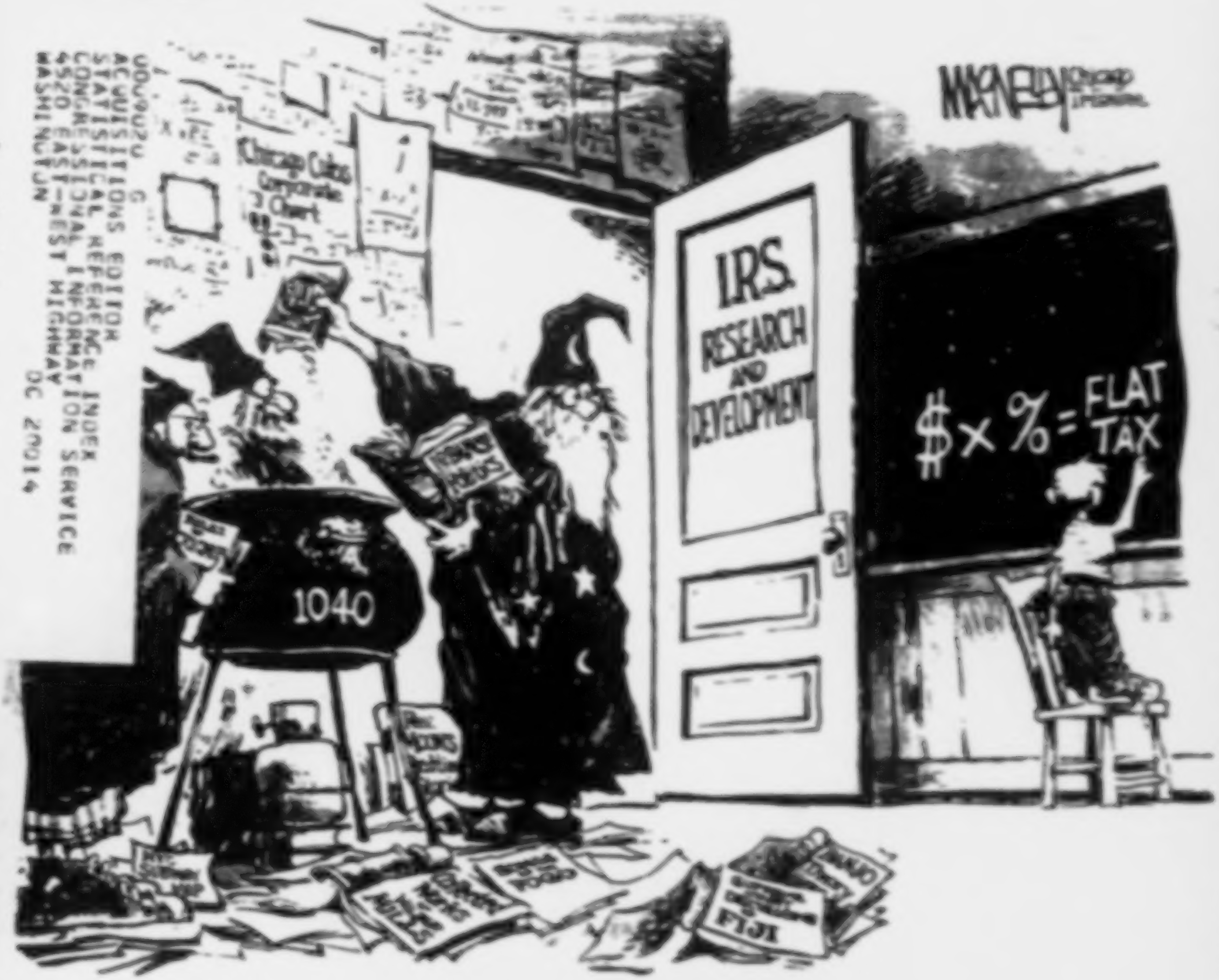
Public Opinion

Published by
American
Enterprise
Institute

Feb/March 1985

E
DIA IN
APAIGN 84:
PART II

U0U9020 G
ACQUISITIONS EDITOR
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INDEX
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE
4520 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY
WASHINGTON DC 20014


MACNELLY CHICAGO TRIBUNE
Chicago Cubs Corporate Chart
I.R.S. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
$ x % = FLAT TAX
1040
FIJI

TAX AMERICANA

Tax Philosophy, Attitudes, Ethics, plus
What Should the Democrats Do About Foreign Policy?

Public opinion

Volume 8, Number 1 February/March 1985

Publisher
William J. Baroody, Jr.

Co-Editors
Seymour Martin Lipset
Ben J. Wattenberg

Senior Editor
Everett Carll Ladd

Managing Editor
Karlyn H. Keene

Deputy Managing Editor
Victoria A. Sackett

Assistant Editor
Graham Hueber

Intern
Andrew Proctor

Editorial Board
David R. Gergen, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick,
Irving Kristol, Howard Penniman,
Austin Ranney, Richard M. Scammon,
Laurence H. Silberman, Herbert Stein,
and Richard J. Whalen

Editorial Associate
Marilyn M. Potter

Assistants
John Benson
Lois Timms

Art & Design Director
Pat Taylor

Chart Illustrator
Hördur Karlsson

Staff Editor
Elizabeth D. Ashooh

PUBLIC OPINION, February/March 1985, Vol. 8, No. 1. Published bimonthly by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. Copyright 1985 American Enterprise Institute. Subscription rates: [illegible] for one year, [illegible] for two years. Individual copy: [illegible]. Information on bulk orders of multiple subscriptions available on request. Editorial and business offices: c/o AEI, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Send changes of address and all subscription correspondence to Circulation Department, c/o AEI, same address. "American Enterprise Institute" and are registered service marks of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

ISSN 0149-9157

CONTENTS

2 **TAX PHILOSOPHY**
An interview with Barber Conable and Joseph Pechman
The average American assumes that tax reform means he will pay less. What does it really mean, and does the rhetoric that surrounds tax reform mask a more fundamental ideological battle?

8 **TAX ATTITUDES**
by Everett Carll Ladd
Taxes are by no means one of our favorite things, but they are a fact of life that most people seem to accept. A discussion of the climate of opinion that surrounds tax reform.

11 **TAX ETHICS: SOCIAL VALUES AND NONCOMPLIANCE**
by Madelyn Hochstein
What are tax cheaters made of? An analysis of an extensive survey conducted by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the IRS.

FOREIGN POLICY AND THE DEMOCRATS: TWO VIEWS

15 **WHY DEMOCRATS SHOULD EMPHASIZE FOREIGN POLICY**
by Penn Kemble

16 **WHY DEMOCRATS SHOULD STEER CLEAR OF FOREIGN POLICY—AND DO**
by Victor Fingerhut

19 **OPINION ROUNDUP:**
TAX AMERICANA PLUS AMERICA THROUGH THE AGES

43 **THE MEDIA IN CAMPAIGN '84: PART II**
WINGLESS, TOOTHLESS, AND HOPELESS
by Michael J. Robinson
If the media are tilted to favor liberals, how did Ronald Reagan and his companions do so well in 1984? Network news, says this author, is both less biased than conservative critics assume, and has less clout.

49 **URBAN BLIGHT: THE DEMOCRATS' ERODING METROPOLITAN BASE**
by James A. Barnes and John C. Weicher
What used to be Democratic strongholds are slipping away, and might continue to do so.

52 **STATE ELECTIONS: WHAT 1984 MEANS FOR 1986**
by John Bibby
Now that we've exhausted the national election results from last November, it's time to take a look at the state level, where things are really changing.

by Everett Carll Ladd

Tax Attitudes

Those who would use the tax system to redistribute wealth substantially have a reason to like taxes as such. For everyone else, taxes can never be more than a necessary evil. People want government to do things—assist the needy, build and operate good schools, provide for the national defense—and taxation is the unpalatable but unavoidable instrument for getting the necessary resources.

Since most of us believe that taxes are defensible only insofar as they support desired services, and since almost everyone sees some "waste" in the delivery of services, the prevailing judgment must always be, to some extent, that taxes are too high. At any given time, the only interesting and important question is: how deep or salient is this judgment?

Developments over the last couple of decades might well have brought public concern over high taxes to a boiling point. In 1953, according to computations made by the staff of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, average-income families paid 11.8 percent of their total income in taxes—income, social security, sales, property, and so on. By 1966, though, these average-income families were paying 17.8 percent in taxes, and by 1980, 22.7 percent. Real income rose greatly over this span; still, the proportion of their income that families of roughly average earnings paid in local, state, and federal taxes just about doubled. For high-income families—defined here as those earning at least four times the current average—the tax jump was from 20.2 percent of income in 1953, to 32.7 percent in 1980 (see table 1). The potential existed for a real tax revolt.

But it didn't happen. Though local circumstances did produce strong reactions, like California's celebrated Proposition 13 in the 1970s, Americans have on the whole been remarkably tolerant of their growing tax burden. Pollsters such as Gallup regularly ask Americans what they think is the "most important problem facing this country today." Never has more than a tiny portion of those surveyed said "high taxes." When the Opinion Research Corporation asked in a 1984 survey whether federal taxes had in the past year "hurt you seriously, . . . a little, or haven't hurt you at all," only 19 percent complained they had been hurt badly. Thirty-two percent acknowledged they hadn't been hurt at all (p. 21). Forty-eight percent of those interviewed by the *Los Angeles Times* pollsters this January said they were fairly satisfied or very satisfied about the amount of federal income taxes they paid last year; just 29 percent professed anger about their income tax burden (p. 21).

In interpreting public opinion data, the numbers don't simply speak for themselves; one must put them in perspective. This is certainly the case with polling data on the public's dissatisfaction with taxes. A January 1985 CBS News/*New York Times* survey found 45 percent stating that they thought people like themselves paid too much in taxes, while 51 percent felt they paid their fair share. (Only a smattering of saints and masochists said they paid too little, while 3 percent offered no opinion.) Now, both 45 and 51 percent are big proportions—but I am going to insist that tax dissatisfaction is remarkably subdued. Taxes are easy to dislike, and it would seem natural to reply that "people like me pay too much" of them. When less than half the populace are prepared to make that claim, it's a fairly impressive statement of consent to the prevailing system.

Attitudes toward taxes are inextrica-

Table 1
DIRECT TAX BURDENS BORNE BY AVERAGE- AND UPPER-INCOME FAMILIES: 1953, 1966, AND 1980

	Average-income families	Families with incomes four times the average & higher
1953	11.8% of income	20.2% of income
1966	17.8	23.4
1980	22.7	32.7

Note: Average income for a married couple with two dependents, was $5,000 in 1953, $8,750 in 1966, and $21,500 in 1980. The cutoffs for the high income category were $20,000 in 1953, $35,000 in 1966, and $86,000 in 1980.

Source: Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Significant Features of Fiscal Federalism, 1981-1982*, p. 54.

bly caught up in the broader matter of attitudes toward government. Today, most Americans have fairly hearty appetites when it comes to government services, as the brief review of polling data on page 19 shows. At the same time, though, criticisms of contemporary government—as too large or excessive or wasteful—are widely shared. This ambivalence has endured, and it is enormously important to the course of contemporary American policy and governance.

The main result is that a very large slice of the population resists cuts in any of the "meat" of government, while backing efforts to rein government in and slow its growth. In the realm of taxes, the public's ambivalence gets expressed as resistance to tax *hikes*, but an otherwise striking lack of insistence on tax *cuts* (p. 27). Americans say they do not want higher taxes for worthy ends—reducing the deficit, extending services, and so on. If you don't raise taxes, though, we'll keep our grumbling muted.

It is presumably easier to accomplish basic policy change in a democracy when overall dissatisfaction with the status quo is high. We don't see that kind of an opinion climate surrounding taxes. In other ways, though, today's tax reformers find considerable support in the mix of public attitudes.

Fairness I—Taxing the Rich

There is broad agreement that the present tax system is "unfair." Even the congressmen who write the tax laws, and the presidents who administer them, agree on this. But unfair in what sense?

A large majority of Americans will stipulate that the system is unfair because the "rich" and "big corporations" don't pay as much as they should. The United States has never supported an authentic "sock it to 'em," "expropriate their riches" assault on the wealthy but, not surprisingly, it has always expressed some resentment of them: "Tax the rich more; they can afford it." Add to this reaction the well-publicized reality of tax dodges available to people with lots of discretionary income and imaginative accountants. Interestingly enough, though, polls regularly show that it is the highest income groups who are most distressed by the amount of income tax they must pay, not the low- or middle-income taxpayers. This is probably caused by a number of things: the prosperous are more likely to have to write out large end-of-the-tax-year checks, for example, rather than having all their payments disappear quietly in payroll deductions. It is a bit ironic that most Americans think the well-to-do don't pay enough taxes, but that this lower- and middle-income majority doesn't complain as much as the well-to-do about the taxes they *do* pay.

Fairness II—Simplification and Equity

"Simplification" is a magic word when it comes to federal tax reform. In its 1984 survey for the Internal Revenue Service, Yankelovich, Skelly and White offered a long list of things that the IRS might do to reduce nonpayment of taxes. "Simplify the whole tax collection system" was judged much more likely to be highly effective than was any other measure (see table 2). Phrase a question about proposed reforms around "simplifying the federal income tax system," and you are likely to get three-fourths of the public on the pro-reform side (p. 29).

Understandably, a great many people find present tax rules and regulations anything but comprehensible. They are a delight to accountants and attorneys, but a dark morass to most everyone else. It seems evident, though, that these responses reflect something more than a desire to strip away complexity. Backing for simplification is first and foremost a search for fairness. Under the tax code today, those who weasel are rewarded. Among a wide range of middle- and upper-income taxpayers, persons who mine the regulations and their loopholes typically pay less than other comparably situated people who don't make the dubious effort. Relatedly, the tax code is a monument to the innumerable, disjointed effects of special pleading by all manner of interests. All this underlies the cry, "simplify."

Attitudes Toward the Income Tax

Those who now urge major federal tax reform—the Treasury plan(s), Bradley-Gephardt, Kemp-Kasten, or whatever variation—pick up public support because their efforts involve simplification. Yet they hold another high card. Few people like taxes as such, and

Table 2

Question: (Hand card W) Here are some ways that might help the IRS do a better job of collecting the tax money that is owed to the country. Using the 6-point scale on this card, please tell me how effective each would be in your opinion. Just read me the letter and the number from the scale. A "6" means extremely effective and a "1" at the other end of the scale means not at all effective.

	Effective way to help IRS collect taxes owed (Points 5 & 6)	**Midpoint (Points 3 & 4)**	**Not effective (Points 1 & 2)**
Remind people that it's patriotic to pay taxes	20%	34%	45%
Remind people of the penalties for tax evasion	59	33	8
Remind people of how carefully IRS looks at our tax returns	51	39	10
Pay rewards to people whose information leads to the uncovering and conviction of tax evaders	24	41	35
Encourage people to become tax informants	11	35	54
Let people know that IRS follows up on informants' complaints about tax evaders	32	42	26
Making sure that names of those who have been fined or jailed for tax reasons appear in the newspapers	38	34	27
Simplify the whole tax collection system	73	21	6
Increase the penalties for tax evasion	51	35	14
Increase the likelihood of being caught	62	30	8
Offer bonuses to those whose tax returns are accurate and sent in on time	61	23	16

Note: "Effective" = those giving the response "6" (extremely effective) and those giving the response "5"; "Midpoint" = a combination of those responding "4" and those responding "3"; "Not effective" = those responding "2" and those responding "1" (not at all effective).

Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July, 1984.

most resist tax hikes in general, but Americans these days are especially unhappy about anything that suggests raising *federal income tax rates*. (Conversely, proposals to cut these rates are appealing.) If we absolutely had to raise more tax revenue, pollsters variously ask, what would be the best way to do it? The most popular answers are, in no special order, tax the rich, the corporations, cigarettes, booze, and trivia. But when one gets beyond this, increasing federal income tax rates almost always loses out to the other main alternatives: to a VAT, a national sales tax, and to getting more income tax revenue by reducing special tax treatment and deductions (p. 27). At the state level, too, people are much less inclined to back raising income tax rates than sales tax rates (p. 27).

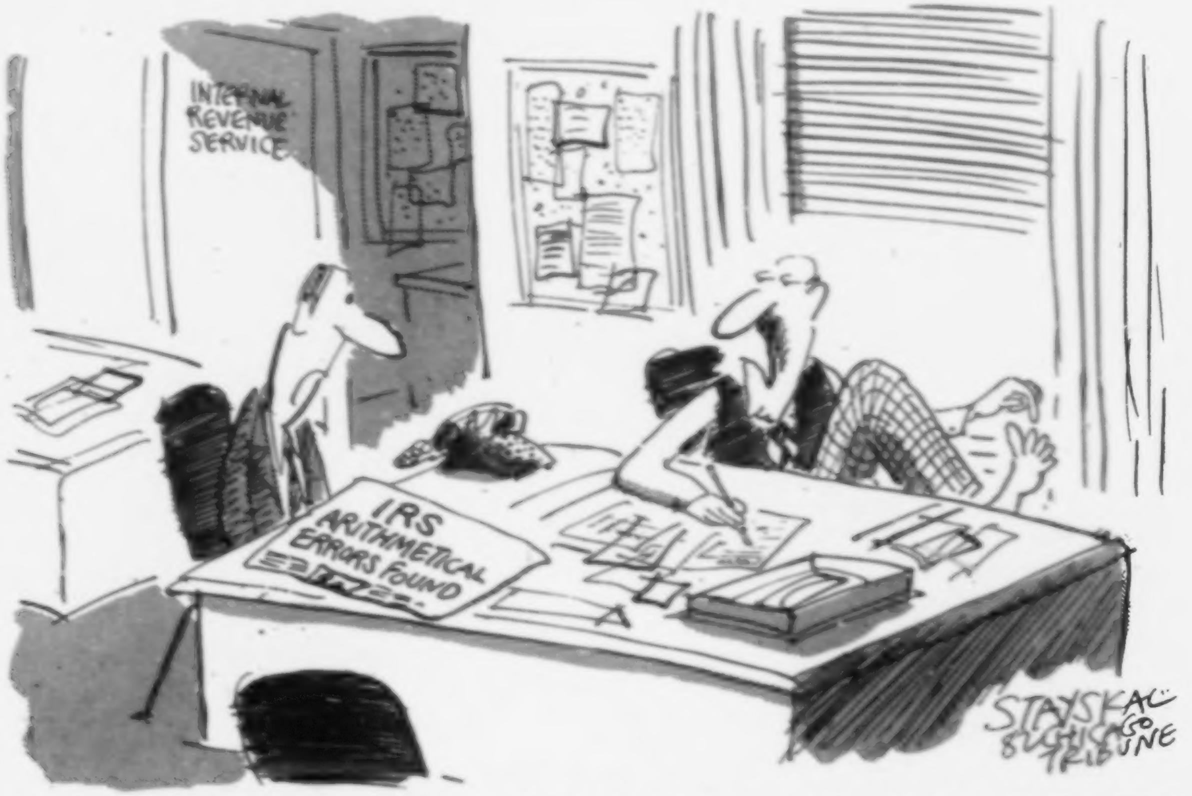
The most remarkable aspect of this relatively adverse stance on income tax rates is its lack of a class base. Much larger, and comparable, proportions of *every* income group say they would prefer a national sales tax on things other than food, to raising individual income tax rates. In general, despite a vague inclination to "tax the rich," class issues and divisions are strikingly muted on tax policy—a long-standing product of America's "one class" self-image and ideology.

But Not Those Exemptions!

The idea of simplifying federal tax law, eliminating many special exemptions and deductions, and reducing income tax rates substantially, finds broad support—although a majority reject the principle of an absolutely flat tax (p. 28). There is, nonetheless, a big obstacle to such reform in mass public opinion, almost exactly like the one we find on expenditure cuts. (Large majorities want to trim back federal spending, but not spending on virtually any of the big-ticket items.) With income tax reform, Americans want to lower rates by closing up "a lot" of loopholes and deductions, but not many of the big deductions like charitable contributions, interest paid on mortgages and other loans, and state or local taxes.

One sometimes hears that the above simply testifies to the public's selfishness: "Cut spending, but not for programs that help me; cut deductions, but only the other guy's, not mine." There is some truth here—surely Americans are not immune to self-interest—and yet the overall argument is insufficient. Large majorities of those who are not poor resist cuts in spending on programs aiding the needy. Similarly, solid majorities of those who do not claim the basic deductions cited above still want to keep them. This is another variant of the contemporary sense of fairness: Specifically, it is now considered fair to deduct home mortgage interest payments, state and local tax payments, charitable contributions, and the like.

How much room is there to cut federal spending, when all the worthy items are left in? And how much room will there be to cut federal income tax rates, when all worthy deductions are acknowledged? I think we know the answer to the former question. The latter is much less clear, because it is far newer to the stage of national concern. And for the public at large, the shape of the overall tax reform package is going to be decisive—yet it is thus far almost wholly unconsidered. As a coherent final package takes shape and is publicized, we will begin to learn the answer.



"Sure, we've made some mistakes in the past. That's why we're back using the old tried and true methods!"

Reprinted by permission: Tribune Media Service, Inc.

by Madelyn Hochstein

Tax Ethics: Social Values and Noncompliance

Our federal income tax system works only to the extent that people decide to go along with it. Compulsory as taxpaying may seem, it really rests upon voluntary compliance: The major responsibility for reporting and calculating tax obligations falls directly on the taxpayer. People who choose not to comply are a major source of worry, especially now that we are reexamining the tax system, its effect on the economy, and its fairness to different classes of taxpayers.

The gap between what *is* and what *should be* collected in federal income taxes contributes substantially to our growing budget deficit. Moreover, much of the impetus behind tax reform stems from the concern that parts of the current income tax structure actually encourage cheating, or at least discourage complying. Many of those who fail to pay taxes are not cheaters in the true sense: they may be victims of ignorance, confusion, or error. But there are some out there who avoid or evade paying what's due, and do it intentionally.

With noncompliance on the rise and tax policy under the gun, the Internal Revenue Service asked Yankelovich, Skelly and White to undertake a study of taxpayer attitudes about compliance. Excellent research already existed on certain possible motives behind deciding to pay or not to pay—the fairness of the tax system, knowledge and understanding of how to calculate tax obligations, ability to cope with reporting procedures, and other factors. The new 1984 study aimed to explore the full array of forces—such as demographics, social values, and perceptions of the system and the IRS—that might contribute to compliance problems. We wanted to find out who the noncompliers were and what forces were driving them.

Perceptions of Noncompliance

American taxpayers themselves sense that noncompliance is a growing problem. When asked directly about their perceptions of tax cheating, slightly more than one in two in our survey agreed that it is "becoming more common these days." They believed that, on average, two in five (40 percent) of their fellow taxpayers cheat deliberately at some level. Half of our taxpayers viewed the amounts involved to be insignificant—$100 or less on the average.

It is far simpler, of course, to get people to guess about others' transgressions than it is to get them to confess to their own. We knew from reviewing previous work that for any measure of *reported* tax cheating to be accurate, people must be willing to be candid about their own behavior. Taking this limitation into account, we decided on two distinct measures of tax compliance, one based on reported personal behavior (by direct inquiry—an approach supported by previous work in this area), and the second based on attitudes relating to compliance. The attitudinal measure consisted of scaled, self-referent items on the acceptability of various illegal transactions and various rationales for cheating, merged to yield a single score.

When they were questioned directly, nearly one in five taxpayers (19 percent) admitted to having cheated on their taxes at some time—by underreporting income, or overstating deductions, or both. (Four percent said they had engaged in both types of cheating.)

Most of the confessed underreporters and overstaters did not describe themselves as big-time, veteran cheaters. In fact, of the one in five who admitted cheating, about two-thirds said they did it only once or twice. Moreover, when asked approximately how much money was involved, respondents generally named small amounts.

Attitudes about Cheating

These results were instructive, and consistent with earlier findings, but the real-world furor over noncompliance suggests that they are—as we expected them to be—understated. The attitudinal measure showed us something different. One-fifth said they had cheated on their taxes, but *one-third* (33 percent) were receptive to the idea. An additional one-third (32 percent) were strongly opposed to tax cheating, and, importantly, the remaining one-third were ambivalent (34 percent).

The illegal tax transactions met with clear disapproval . . . with one exception. Barter was seen as highly acceptable by a majority of respondents (76 percent), but chances are that was because most people were unaware that unreported gain from barter is, in fact, illegal.

Table 1

	Total tax-payers	The Attitudinal Measure: Acceptance of Tax Cheating			
		Very low	Low/ Medium	High	Very high
	(100%)	(34%)	(32%)	(22%)	(11%)
The Behavioral Measure: Report having cheated	19%	9%	22%	26%	32%

The Acceptance Threshold

There was a positive relationship between our two measures of noncompliance. A greater acceptance of tax cheating correlated with a greater likelihood of reporting one's own evasive tax behavior. In other words, the more sanguine one was about the idea of cheating, the more likely one was to say one had done it (see table 1).

It is important to note the dramatic difference in reported behavior between taxpayers with extremely low levels of acceptance of tax cheating and those with low-to-medium levels. Reports of tax cheating more than doubled between these two groups, going from 9 percent to 22 percent.

As stated earlier, taxpayers in the low-to-medium acceptance group were ambivalent, and did not strongly endorse either compliant or noncompliant behavior. But the table shows that taxpayers who endorsed tax cheating even slightly were substantially more likely to report cheating on their taxes than those who did not endorse cheating. Thus, there is a strong indication that people have an "acceptance threshold," and that the threshold can be crossed at a relatively early point on

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
BOOTH

Drawing by Booth; © 1972 The New Yorker magazine.

"Other folks have to pay taxes, too, Mr. Herndon, so would you please spare us the dramatics!"

the acceptance scale.

Why Do They Do What They Do?

What motivates taxpayers to cheat on their income taxes? In order to identify the key contributors to noncompliance, we needed to determine the extent to which demographic characteristics, perceptions about the IRS, social values, or something else motivated them to cheat. Two sets of independent variables—demographic and attitudinal—were assembled, plus a composite variable called "opportunity" (self-employed status, household income of $30,000 a year or more, receipt of cash income, and certain "high opportunity" occupations such as business, the professions, sales). All were tested against the reported and attitudinal measures of noncompliance. (We used a linear regression procedure to establish relationships between them.) The thirteen attitudinal variables were:

- **Flexible Honesty:** Belief that it is perfectly acceptable to keep an extra $10 in change from a department store or to "stretch" an insurance claim to get more money. Over half the public scored high on this factor—meaning they were willing to accept a little dissimulation under the right circumstances.
- **Skepticism About Human Integrity:** Belief that nearly everyone cheats on taxes. They question, for example, whether taxpayers would be deterred from cheating by anything other than limited opportunity or fear of getting caught. Three-quarters scored high on this item, and 41 percent very high.
- **"Beat the System":** Belief that the only way to get ahead in this country is to go around the system, and that it's fun to get around the law as long as you don't actually break it.
- **Sympathy for Tax Protesters:** Strong support for tax protesters: They shouldn't be treated as criminals; they serve a useful purpose by focusing attention on how the government spends tax money.
- **Patriotism vs. Self-Interest:** Belief that it's more important to act in the country's best interest than selfishly, in one's own best interest.
- **Perceived Honesty/Fairness of IRS:** Belief that IRS employees can't be bribed, that they are willing to act in the taxpayer's best interest, that they investigate their own people as thoroughly as they do everyone else.
- **Omnipotence of IRS:** Belief that in our computer age, tax cheaters are bound to get caught, that the IRS is always nearby and watching.
- **Strong Fear of Getting Caught:** Belief that people are certain to be caught if they cheat by large or small amounts on taxes; that people who may want to cheat don't, because they've heard how the government punishes cheaters.
- **Belief that the Tax System is Complex:** Belief that the tax laws and system as they apply to one's own situation are too complicated.
- **Objections to Government Spending:** Belief that the government is using one's tax money to support programs one disapproves, or that taxes are too high for what the government provides in return.
- **Feelings of Disenfranchisement:** Belief that one has no voice in government, that politics and government are too complicated, that public officials don't care about "people like me."
- **Overall Effectiveness of IRS:** Belief that the IRS does a good job overall and on specifics, such as taxpayer assistance and enforcement, and that it is relatively effective compared to other federal agencies.
- **Belief that Tax System is Unfair:** Belief that tax laws applying to one's own situation are very unfair; that the tax system benefits the rich, is unfair to the average taxpayer, and that the system makes one pay more than a fair share.

Social Values Play Key Role

None of the demographic or attitudinal variables correlated with the measure of reported tax cheating behavior. Nor did any of the demographic variables emerge as variables associated with the attitudinal measure. Moreover, perceptions of the IRS and the tax system *are not* the driving force behind noncompliance.

Attitudinal variables reflecting social values, however, correlated strongly with the attitudinal measure of acceptance of tax cheating. Two in particular, "a flexible definition of honesty" and "skepticism about human integrity," linked strongly to noncompliance.

Who Cheats?

We examined the demographic profile of reported cheaters and those who condone cheating. As would be expected, taxpayers who reported having cheated, compared to those who did not, generally were in situations that offered more opportunity to engage in evasive tax behavior. Compared to taxpayers overall, admitted cheaters were more often in their peak earning years (25 to 54), earned $25,000 or more, were better educated, and were in those occupations that permitted some maneuvering of their tax situation. Those who were more likely to overstate deductions were more often older and upscale than those who said that they underreported income: In other words, they had higher incomes and were better educated. The survey results also showed that the incidence of both underreporting income and overstating deductions increases with income—again a function of opportunity. Among those who reported cheating, taxpayers in the under $15,000 income group, in addition to those earning $50,000 or more, were most likely to admit having done it three times or more. And, interestingly, those in the least affluent group (under $15,000) were most likely to admit cheating by disproportionately large amounts of money given their income level—more than $500. The incidence of cheating was highest in the West, followed by the mid-Central region: the mid-Central region tended more toward underreporting, while those in the West cited higher than average levels of both underreporting and overstating deductions. Reported cheating overall was lowest in the Atlantic region; the incidence of overstating deductions there matched the high levels found in the West.

Those who condoned cheating on the attitudinal measure generally had less opportunity to cheat than those who reported having done so. Compared to taxpayers in general, those who condoned cheating were: more often younger (under 35, and particularly under 25); less likely to be college graduates; and were overrepresented in both the under $15,000 and $25-50,000 income groups. Aside from the clear age factor, the demographic profile of taxpayers who found tax cheating acceptable is not especially well defined.

Compliance Profiles

In an effort to understand what *did* make people cheat, we segmented the taxpayer sample according to their attitudes about tax cheating (a cluster analysis), and five distinct attitudinal groups emerged. It is important to note that these groups reflect *attitudes* and are not necessarily indicative of noncompliant behavior. But it would seem likely that certain groups have a greater predisposition to engage in noncompliant behavior.

- *Strong Compliers* (22 percent) were philosophically opposed to all forms of and rationales for tax cheating—except unreported barter, which was probably not viewed as illegal by this group. Of the five groups, these taxpayers were least likely to report having cheated on taxes. Compared to other groups, this was the oldest and most upscale, and included a large component of retired people.
- *The Silent Majority* (23 percent) were also opposed to all forms of and rationales for tax cheating, including unreported barter. But this group was not quite as adamantly opposed as were Strong Compliers.

This group was somewhat more likely to report tax cheating than Strong Compliers, primarily in the form of overstating deductions, and was similar to the general taxpayer universe.

- *Rationalizers* (18 percent) said they were opposed to some forms of tax cheating, like padding business expenses and stretching medical deductions. This was perhaps "sour grapes," though, because of the three noncompliant groups, the Rationalizers appear to have had the least opportunity to cheat. Of the five groups, they were most likely to endorse *almost all rationales for tax cheating*. Compared to the Strong Compliers and the Silent Majority, this group was more likely to admit having cheated. Rationalizers were the most downscale of all groups—heavily blue collar, not affluent, least educated, and younger than the first two groups.
- *The Scramblers* (21 percent) were most likely of all five groups to endorse not reporting cash payments and "outside" income, *and* to admit tax cheating, particularly in the form of underreporting income, in keeping with their views. However, unlike the other noncompliant groups, Scramblers apparently had little need to rationalize their behavior. This group was heavily blue collar and younger, but was somewhat more upscale than Rationalizers.
- *The Strategic Noncompliers* (16 percent) were obviously aware of and condoned all types of tax cheating across the board. They ranked second only to Scramblers in terms of incidence of reported tax cheating, and they were most likely to indulge in *both* types of cheating. They also subscribed—to a relatively high degree—to most forms of rationalization for their behavior. This group was youngest of all, but most potentially upscale of the three noncompliant groups.

The Social Values Climate

Our research effort reveals a relatively high values-based predisposition to noncompliant behavior, and this is reinforced when viewed alongside earlier Yankelovich, Skelly and White research. The current social climate can best be described as a blending of the 1950s emphasis on economic achievement with the 1960s/1970s sense of self. In other words, the 1960s/1970s belief in individual, unique characteristics and needs is sustained, but is now joined by a goal that calls for personal mastery of economic hurdles to provide for one's individual needs. Specifically, four social themes relevant to the noncompliance issue are on the rise:

1. *A New Realism:* The recognition that one cannot do, be, or have everything.
2. *A Will To Win:* To meet one's own needs, to succeed on one's own.
3. *A Belief in Cost-Effectiveness as an almost moral imperative:* not low cost, but a match among time, money, effort on the cost side with the benefits being sought.
4. *A Rise in Strategic, Nonideological Thinking and Pragmatism.*

In brief, this new mid-1980s social climate—competitive, individualistic, strategic—is on the rise, and goes a long way toward providing a context in which to view the noncompliance question. Thus, in a tax system and a social climate in which the opportunities, incentives, and predispositions exist to play games with what is "rendered unto Caesar," it is neither biology nor demography that is destiny these days, but more likely attitudes and values.

METHODOLOGY

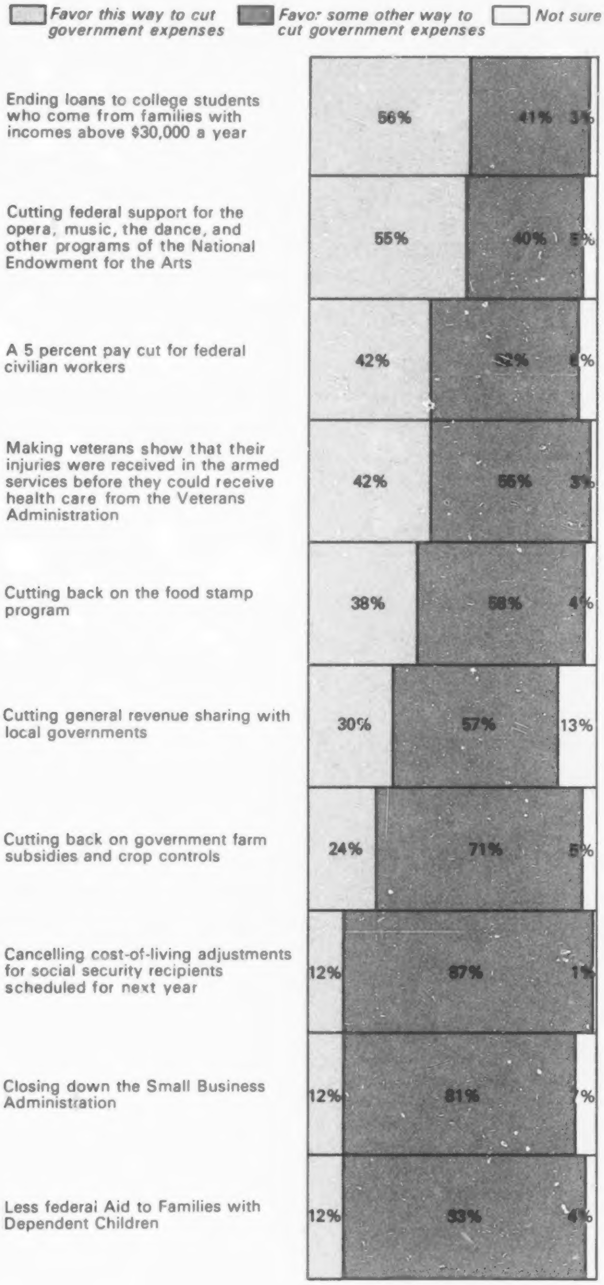
The study discussed in this article is based on a nationally projectable, random sample of active taxpayers 18 years of age and older and was drawn from the contiguous United States. A total of 2,200 in-person interviews were completed during May-July, 1984. Prior to the survey, an extensive literature review of previous work in the field was undertaken and a series of focus groups were conducted.

OPINION ROUNDUP

TAX AMERICANA

HIGH DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES

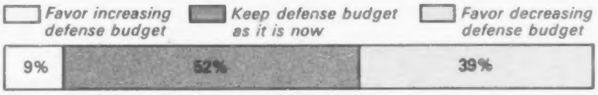
Question: Of course, nobody wants to give up necessary government services but, assuming that federal expenses for next year will *have* to be cut, would you favor . . ., or would you rather consider some other way to cut government expenses, instead?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

NO GREAT ENTHUSIASM FOR CUTS ON BIG TICKET ITEMS

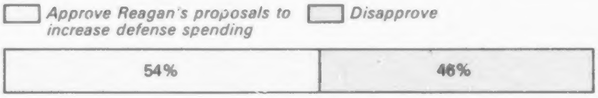
Question: In general, do you favor increasing or decreasing the present defense budget, or keeping it the same as it is now?



Note: Sample size = 1,255 adults.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, December 27, 1984–January 2, 1985.

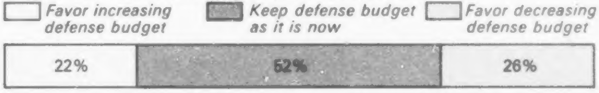
Question: Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of President Reagan's proposals to increase military spending?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

Question: Are you in favor of increasing government spending on military and defense programs, reducing it, or keeping it about the same?

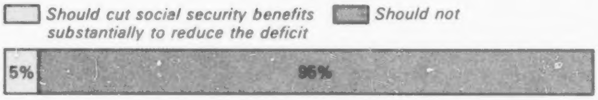
Respondents who said they voted in 1984 election



Note: Based on responses of those 75% who said they voted in the 1984 election.

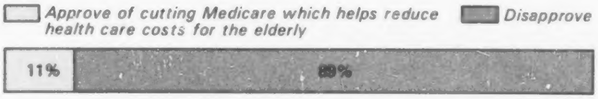
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 8-14, 1984.

Question: Do you think the government should cut social security benefits substantially to reduce the budget deficit, or not?



Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 11-16, 1985.

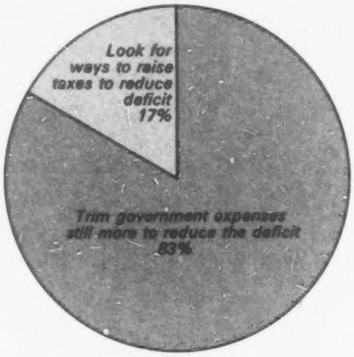
Question: I'm going to mention some specific cuts Reagan is proposing to reduce the deficit. For each, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of it being cut. . . .



Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 11-16, 1985.

But Public Believes Much Cutting Can Be Done

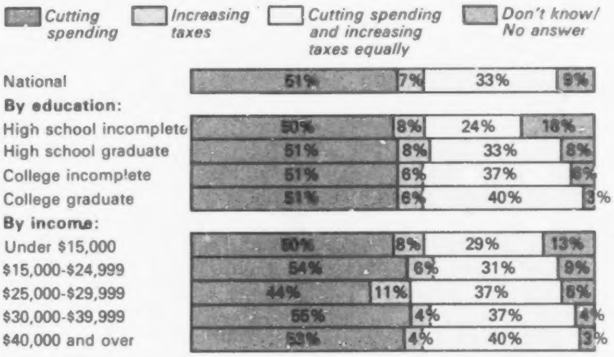
Question: Some people say that we have cut so much from the federal budget that there's hardly anything left but worthwhile programs. Other people say that there's still a lot of fat that can be eliminated. In order to reduce the deficit, do you think we should trim government expenses still more or do you think it is time to look for ways to raise some of the taxes?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

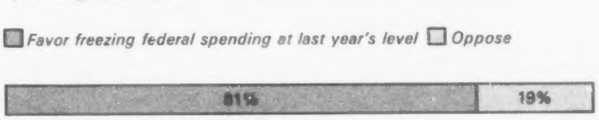
Question: In the next fiscal year, the federal government is expected to spend about 180 billion dollars more than it takes in. Which *one* of these basic ways of reducing the deficit would you *most* prefer? Mostly by cuts in spending, mostly by increases in taxes which would be earmarked for reducing the deficit, about equally by cuts in spending and by tax increases, don't know/no answer.

Prefer reducing spending by:



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, May 18-24, 1984.

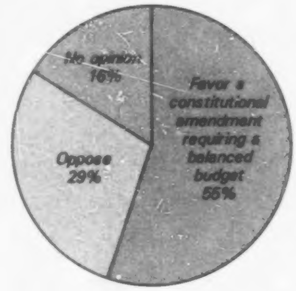
Question: In order to help reduce the federal budget deficit, do you favor or oppose freezing, that is keeping this year's federal spending at last year's level?



Note: Respondents to the NBC News poll said by 62% to 38% that federal spending on defense and the military should be included in the freeze. By 76% to 24%, those surveyed opposed "eliminating this year's cost of living adjustments to social security recipients" to reduce the federal budget deficit.

Source: Survey by NBC News, February 3-4, 1985.

Question: Do you favor or oppose a constitutional amendment which would require the federal government to balance the national budget each year?

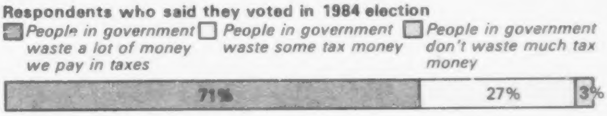


Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, February 10-13, 1984.

TOO MUCH WASTE

Question: Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don't waste very much of it?

Respondents who said they voted in 1984 election

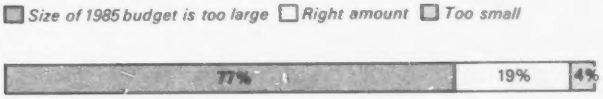


Note: Based on responses of those 75% who said they voted in the 1984 election.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, November 8-14, 1984.

GOVERNMENT TOO BIG . . .

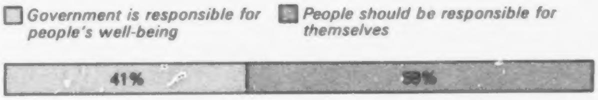
Question: In general, do you feel that the size of the (Reagan) administration's budget for 1985 is too large, too small, or about the right amount?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, February 10-13, 1984.

AND DOING TOO MUCH

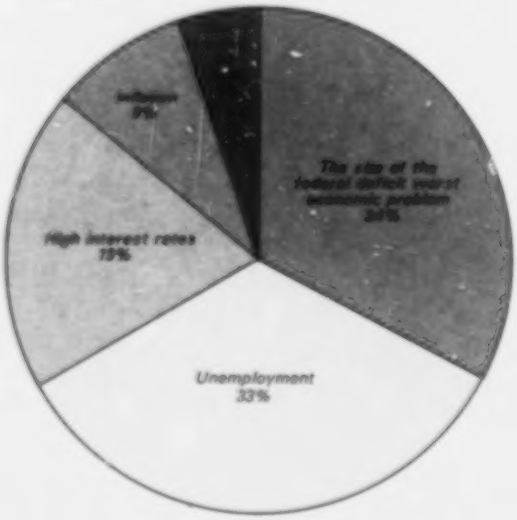
Question: Which statement comes closest to your position: "The government is responsible for the well-being of all its citizens and has an obligation to take care of people when they are in trouble," or "People are responsible for their own well-being and they have an obligation to take care of themselves when they are in trouble?"



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

Taxes: Not Top Public Concern

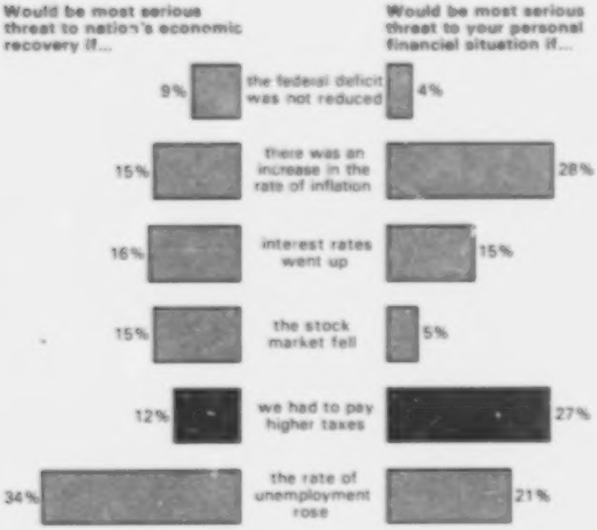
Question: Still thinking of matters that have to do with the nation's economy, which one of these problems would you say is worst these days. . . ?



Note: Sample = registered voters, 77% of the total sample.
Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, September 7-11, 1984.

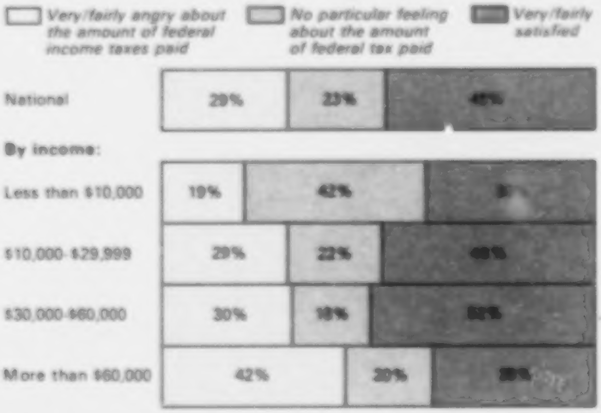
Question: Now I'm going to mention some things that might happen this year and ask which one, in your opinion, would be the most serious threat to the nation's economic recovery. For example, suppose . . .

Now, which one of those things would be the most serious threat to your own personal financial situation? If say . . .



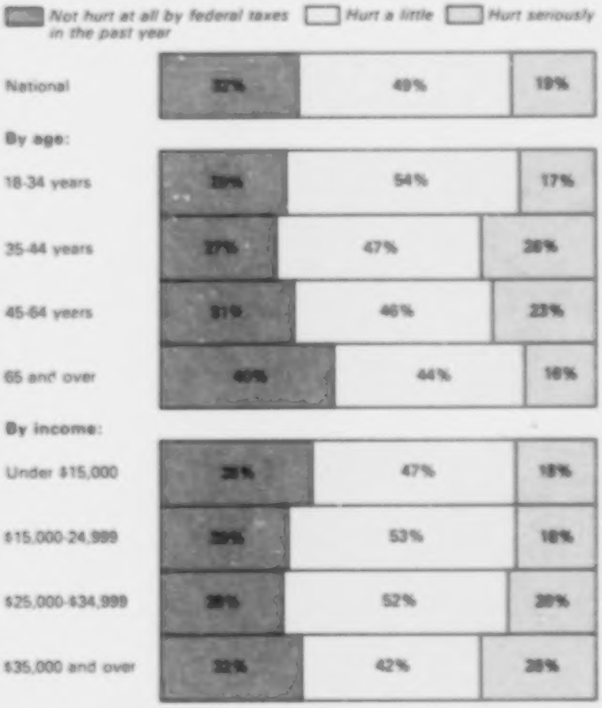
Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

Question: Are you very angry about the amount of federal income taxes you and your family paid last year, or fairly angry, or fairly satisfied, or very satisfied, or don't you have any particular feeling one way or the other about the amount of federal income taxes you and your family paid last year?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

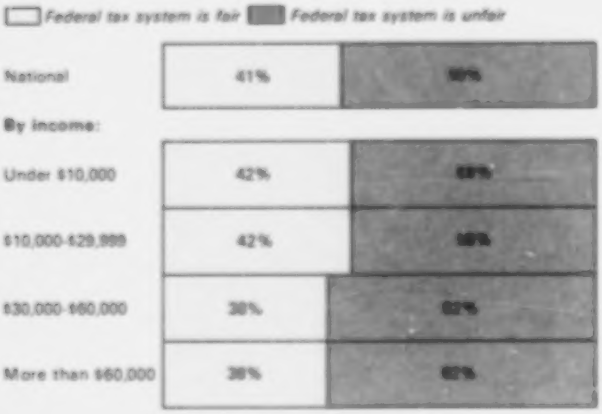
Question: Speaking for yourself or your family, have federal taxes *in the past year* hurt you seriously, hurt you a little, or haven't hurt you at all?



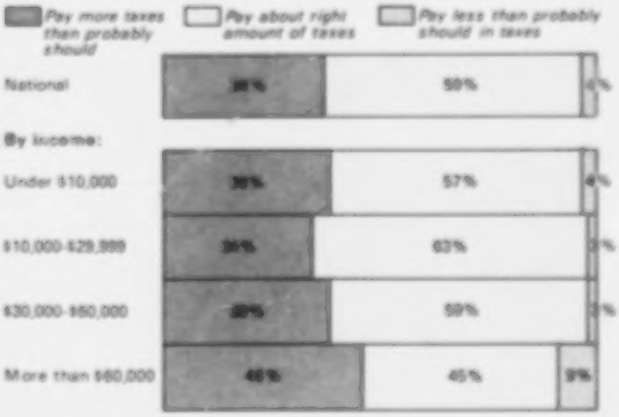
Note: Sample size = 1,004
Source: Survey by Opinion Research Corporation, April 13-19, 1984.

Tax System

Question: We'd like to know about the federal taxes you or your family paid last year and whether you think everyone in the United States pays his or her fair share. Do you think our system of federal taxes is basically fair, or not?

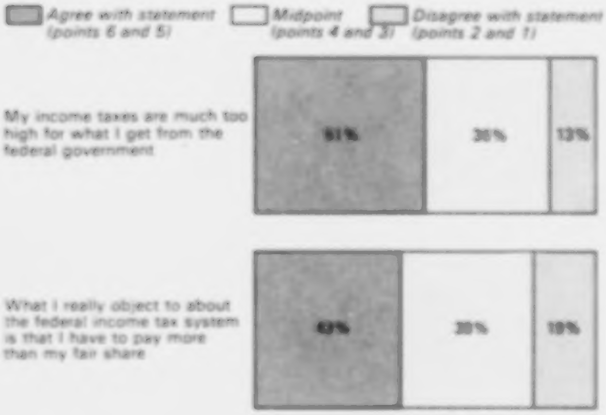


Question: Compared with other taxpayers, is it your impression that you pay more taxes than you probably should, or about the right amount, or that you pay less taxes than you probably should?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

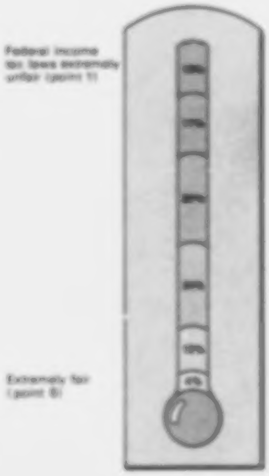
Question: First I'd like to get some of your general opinions about the federal government and the country as a whole. Here is a list of statements. Using the scale at the bottom of the card, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each one. A "6" means you strongly agree and a "1" means that you strongly disagree. Just read me the letter of the statement and the number from the scale . . .



Note: Not all statements asked are shown. "Agree" = those giving the response "6" (strongly agree) and those giving the response "5"; "Midpoint" = a combination of those responding "4" and those responding "3"; "Disagree" = those responding "2" and those responding "1" (strongly disagree).

Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July, 1984.

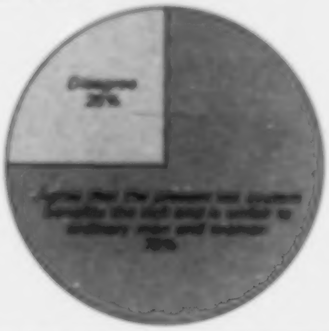
Question: Still thinking about yourself, how *fair* do you think our federal income tax laws are for your particular income situation? Again, please answer on a scale of "1" or "6." Only this time, a "6" means extremely fair and "1" at the other end of the scale means extremely unfair. (Hand card)



Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July 1984.

Just Isn't Fair

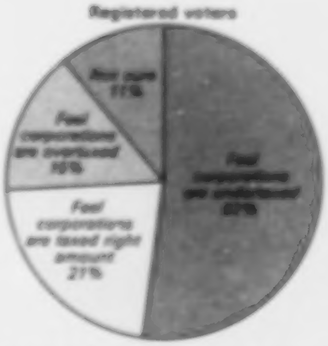
Question: Here are a few statements people make about the income tax system. For each, tell me if you agree or disagree, or if perhaps you have no opinion on it. . . . The present tax system benefits the rich and is unfair to the ordinary working man or woman.



Source: Survey by ABC News/Washington *Post*, January 11-16, 1985.

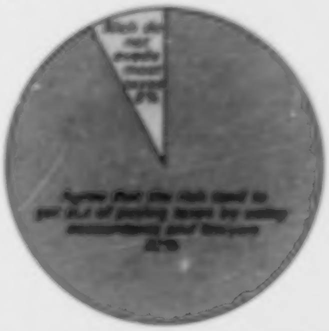
Question: As a general rule, do you feel corporations are: overtaxed, undertaxed, or taxed the right amount?

Registered voters



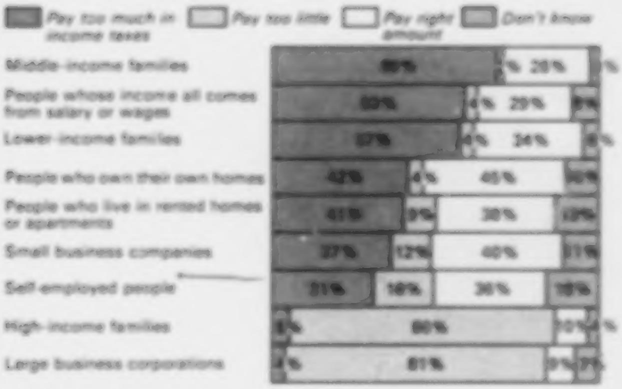
Note: Sample size = 1,021 registered voters.
Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for *Time*, January 31–February 2, 1984.

Question: It has been argued that while most lower and middle income people now pay what they owe in federal taxes through payroll deductions, most higher income people get out of paying much of their taxes by having tax accountants and lawyers who show them how to use loopholes in the tax law for tax shelters and other devices. Do you feel this tends to happen or not?



Note: Sample size = 1,255.
Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, November 26-29, 1984.

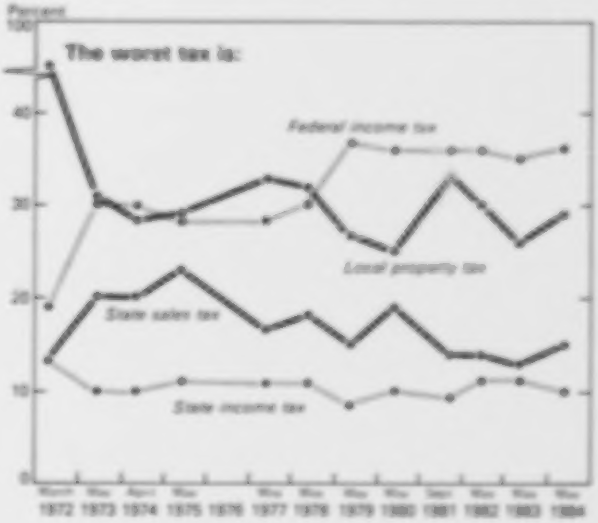
Question: Here is a list of some different types of people or groups. (HAND RESPONDENT CARD) Would you go down that list, and for each one tell me whether you think they have to pay too much in income taxes, or too little in income taxes, or about the right amount? First, . . .



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-2), January 5-19, 1985.

SPECIAL DISSATISFACTION WITH FEDERAL INCOME TAX

Question: Which do you think is the worst tax, that is the least fair, . . .

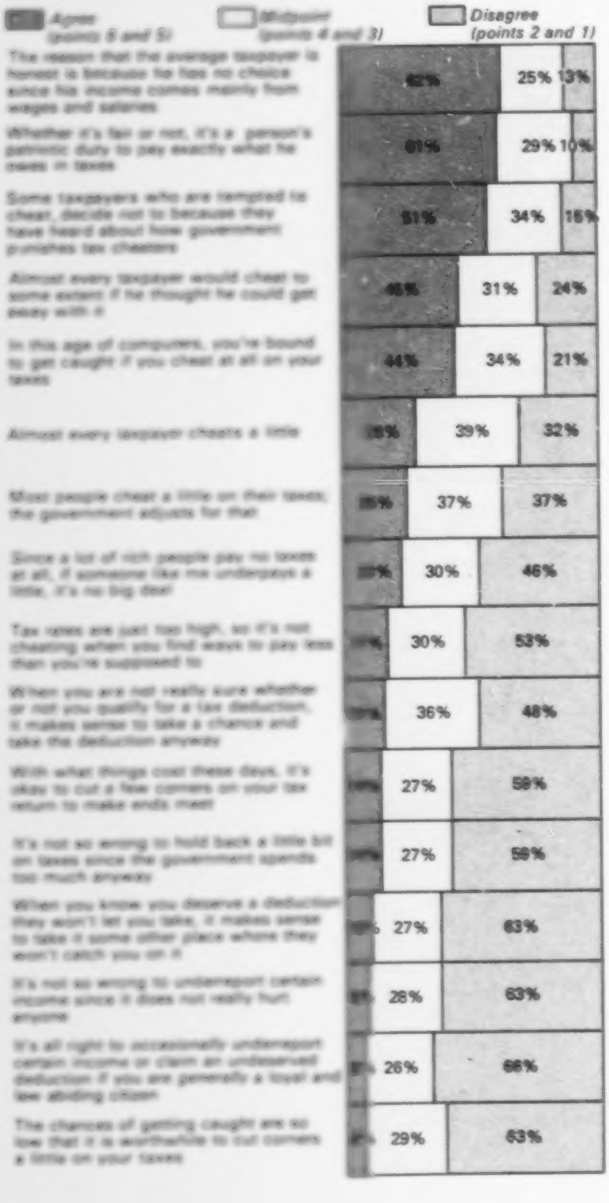


	March 1972	May 1973	April 1974	May 1975	May 1977	May 1978	May 1979	May 1980	Sept. 1981	May 1982	May 1983	May 1984
Federal income tax	19%	30%	30%	28%	28%	30%	37%	36%	36%	36%	35%	36%
State income tax	13	10	10	11	11	11	8	10	9	11	11	10
State sales tax	13	20	20	23	17	18	15	19	14	14	13	15
Local property tax	45	31	28	29	33	32	27	25	33	30	26	29
Don't know	11	11	14	10	11	10	13	10	9	9	15	10

Source: For 1972-1982, surveys by the Opinion Research Corporation for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, latest that of May 1982; for 1983 and 1984, surveys by the Gallup Organization for ACIR, latest that of May 1984.

Cheating: Americans' Beliefs

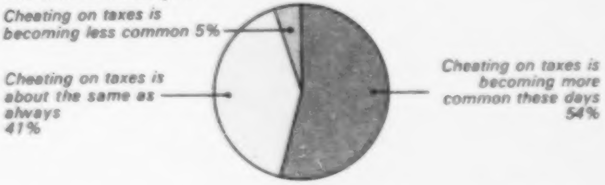
Question: Here are a number of statements people have made which you may or may not agree with; and here is another 6-point rating scale. Please read each statement carefully and indicate how much you agree or disagree with each one. A "6" means you strongly agree and a "1" means you strongly disagree. Just read me the letter of the statement from each small card and your rating from the scale on the large card. By the way, some of these statements may sound pretty much alike; but really, each one is different. . .



Note: "Agree" = those giving the response "6" (strongly agree) and those giving the response "5"; "Midpoint" = a combination of those responding "4" and those responding "3"; "Disagree" = those responding "2" and those responding "1" (strongly disagree).

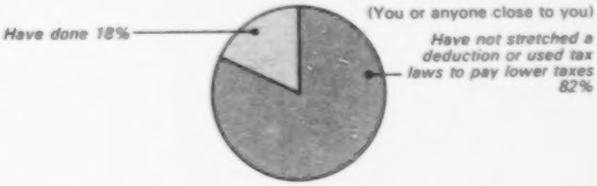
Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July, 1984.

Question: In your opinion, do you feel that cheating on taxes is becoming more common these days, less common, or just about the same as always?



Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July, 1984.

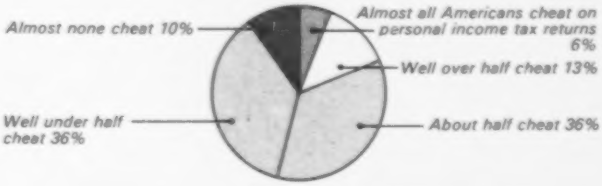
Question: Have you or has anyone close to you ever stretched to the limit a particular deduction, let some outside income go unreported, or used some other provision of the tax law in order to pay lower taxes, or hasn't this happened?



Note: Sample size = 1,255. In another question, 86% told the interviewer that "many other people do things like that on their taxes"; 14% disagreed.

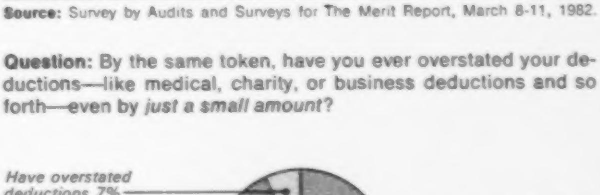
Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, November 26-29, 1984.

Question: Which one statement comes closest to how many or how few Americans you think cheat on their personal income tax returns . . . almost all cheat, well over half cheat, about half cheat, well under half cheat, or almost none cheat?



Source: Survey by Audits and Surveys for The Merit Report, March 8-11, 1982.

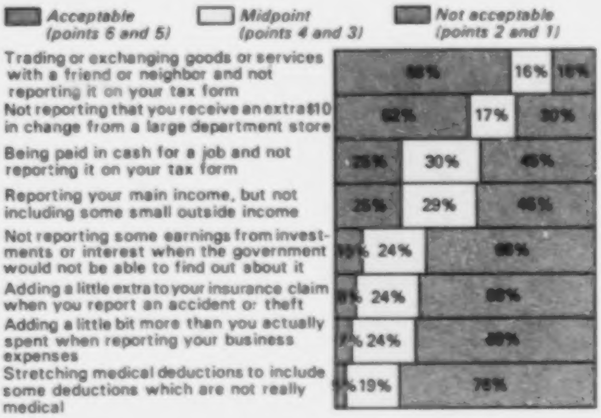
Question: By the same token, have you ever overstated your deductions—like medical, charity, or business deductions and so forth—even by *just a small amount*?



Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July, 1984.

WHAT'S ACCEPTABLE, WHAT'S NOT

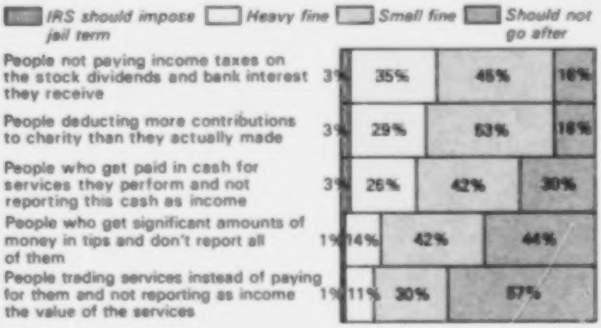
Question: People feel differently about reporting certain financial transactions like the ones on this card. Some people find them perfectly acceptable and correct, others feel that some are not as acceptable. Using a scale of "1" to "6", where "6" means *perfectly acceptable* and "1", at the other end of the scale, means *not at all acceptable*, please rate each transaction. . .



Note: "Acceptable" = those giving the response "6" ("perfectly acceptable and correct") and those giving the response "5"; "Midpoint" = a combination of those responding "4" and those responding "3"; "Not acceptable" = those responding "2" and those responding "1" ("not at all acceptable").

Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July, 1984.

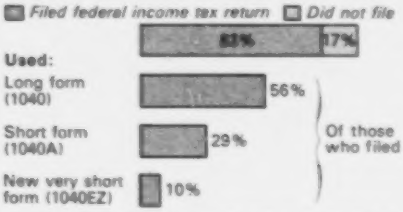
Question: There is a lot of talk about people cheating on their income taxes in various ways. Some people say everybody takes a few liberties and those things aren't very serious. Others say any kind of misreporting on income taxes is serious. Here are some things that some people might do to cut down on the amount of federal income taxes they pay. For each one, would you tell me whether it is something the Internal Revenue Service should send people to jail for, or should impose a heavy fine for, or should impose a small fine for, or not even go after people for?



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 83-5), April 23-30, 1983.

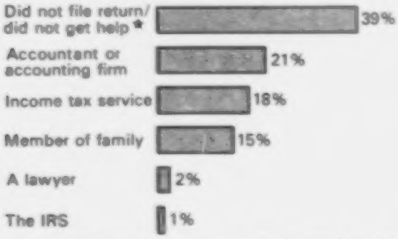
Tax Mechanics

Question: Did you personally have to file a federal income tax return this year—either jointly or by yourself? (If yes) Which of these forms did you use? . . .



Note: Of those who filed, 5% said don't know which form.

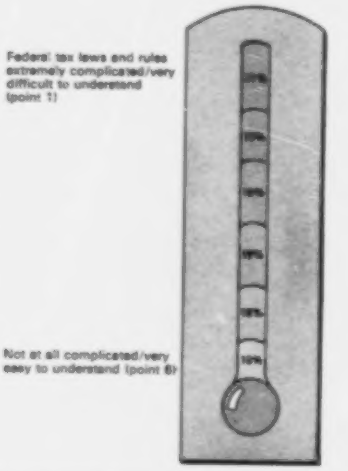
Question: Who made out (helped you with) your federal income tax: some member of your family, the Internal Revenue Service, a bank, a lawyer, an accountant, or an income tax service, or what?



Note: * Determined by earlier questions.

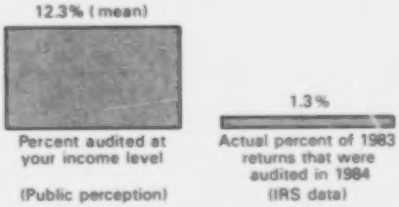
Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization. Top, Roper Report 84-5, April 18-25, 1984. Bottom, Roper Report 83-5, April 23-30, 1983.

Question: Thinking about how easy or difficult it is to fill out your tax form, how *complicated* do you think our federal income tax laws and rules are for your particular income situation? Please answer using this scale of "1" to "6" where "6" is not at all complicated and very easy to understand, and "1" is extremely complicated and very difficult to understand.

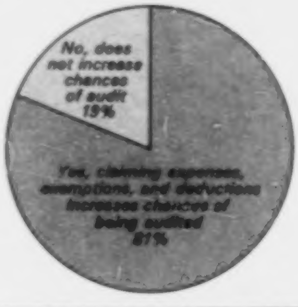


Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July 1984.

Question: Out of every 100 taxpayers at your income level, how many or what percent do you think were audited last year?



Question: Do you think that the chances that a tax return will be audited are increased if the person claims certain kinds of expenses, exemptions, or deductions?

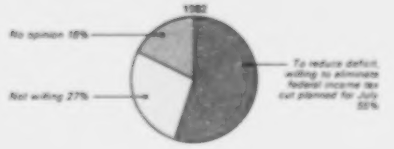


Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the Internal Revenue Service, May-July 1984. Internal Revenue Service for actual percent audited in 1984.

OPINION ROUNDUP

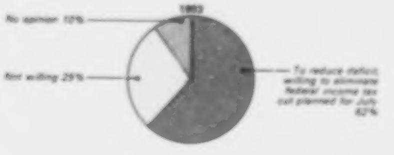
WILLING TO GIVE UP PROPOSED CUTS

Question: To reduce the size of the federal deficit, would you be willing or not willing to . . . eliminate the federal income tax cut planned for July 1983?



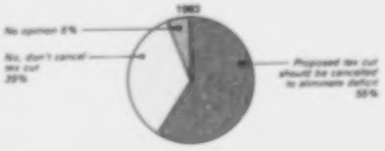
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, May 19-23, 1982.

Question: (It is expected that if Ronald Reagan's budget for next year is adopted, the federal government could spend as much as $200 billion more than it takes in.) To reduce the size of the federal deficit, would you be willing or not willing to eliminate the federal income tax cut planned for next July?



Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, January 16-19, 1983.

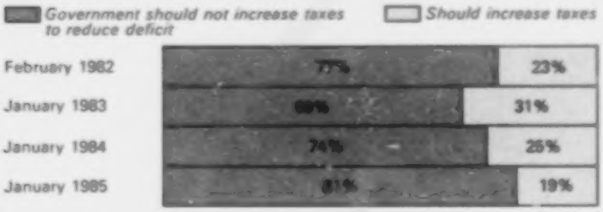
Question: As you may know, a 10 percent federal income tax cut is scheduled to go into effect this summer. Do you think that tax cut should be cancelled to help reduce the federal budget deficit, or not?



Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 18-22, 1983.

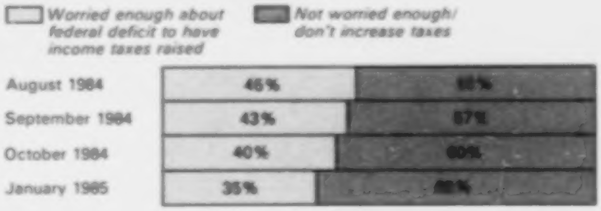
BUT DON'T RAISE TAXES I ALREADY PAY

Question: Financial experts say the next government budget will have the largest deficit in history. Do you think the government should increase taxes to reduce the budget deficit, or not?



Source: Surveys by ABC News/*Washington Post*, latest that of January 11-16, 1985.

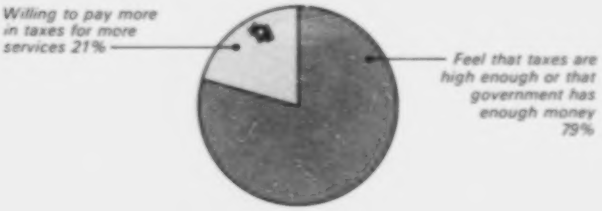
Question: Are you worried enough about the federal budget deficit to be willing to have your income taxes increased in order to reduce it, or not?



Note: "Not sure" calculated out for comparison purposes. It ranged from 9-11%.

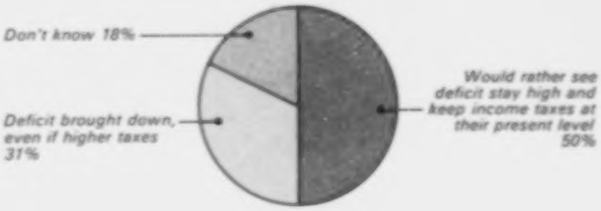
Source: Surveys by NBC News, latest that of February 3-4, 1985.

Question: Some people would be willing to pay higher taxes in order for the federal government to expand its programs and services to the people. Others think taxes are high enough and the federal government is receiving enough money to support its programs and services. Which of those two programs do you most agree with?



Source: Survey by Market Opinion Research for the National Republican Congressional Committee, November 1984.

Question: As you know, we have increasingly higher government budget deficits. Would you rather see the government deficit stay high and keep income taxes at their present level, or would you rather see the deficit brought down even if that means higher income taxes?

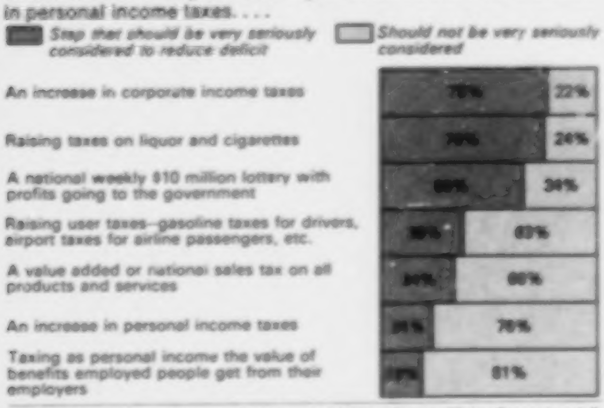


Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 83-2), January 8-22, 1983.

OPINION ROUNDUP

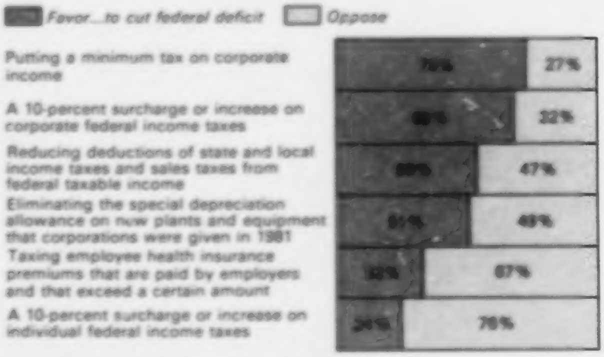
TAX RICH, TAX SIN

Question: As you know, the national deficit is estimated to reach approximately $175 billion in 1985. Here are some steps people have suggested could be taken to reduce the deficit. (Card shown respondent) For each one, would you tell me whether you think it is a step that should or should not be very seriously considered as a way of reducing the deficit. First, an increase in personal income taxes. . . .



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-1), December 1-8, 1984.

Question: Now, to cut the size of the federal deficit, would you favor or oppose (Read each item) . . .?

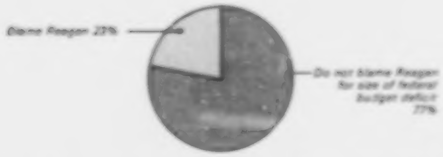


Note: Sample size = 1,255 persons. "Not sure" calculated out for comparison purposes. All were 10% or less except "eliminating special depreciation allowance" which was 13%.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, December 27, 1984-January 2, 1985.

Reagan II: Room to Maneuver

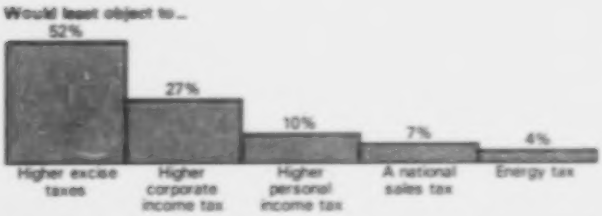
Question: Do you blame Ronald Reagan for the current size of the federal budget deficit, or not?



Note: In a question asked in September 1984 by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for *Time*, 19% said President Reagan and his administration were primarily responsible for the deficit, 26% said Congress was, 30% said Democrats in office before Reagan, and 27% said "not sure."

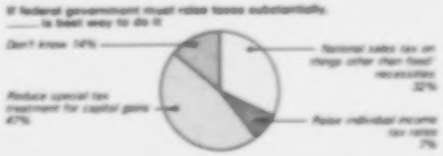
Source: Survey by NBC News, February 3-4, 1985.

Question: Of course, nobody wants higher taxes. But if federal taxes *have* to be raised, which kind would you object to *least*: higher personal income taxes, or higher corporate income taxes, or a national sales tax, or energy taxes like taxes on gasoline, or excise taxes like liquor and cigarette taxes, or what?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

Question: Suppose the federal government must raise taxes substantially. Which of these do you think would be the best way to do it? . . . 1. Have a form of national sales tax on things other than food and similar necessities; 2. Raise individual income taxes; 3. Raise money by reducing special tax treatment for capital gains and cutting tax deduction allowances for charitable contributions, state and local taxes, medical expenses, etc.; 4. Don't know.

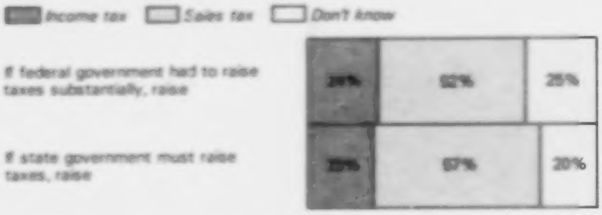


Note: Differences by income were small. Of those making less than $15,000, 30% said have a national sales tax, 6% said raise individual income tax rates, 45% said reduce special tax treatment for capital gains, and 19% said they didn't know. For those making $40,000 and over, the percentages were 37%, 9%, 48% and 6%.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, May 18-24, 1984.

Question: If the federal government had to raise taxes substantially, which would be a better way to do it . . . increasing individual income taxes, or a new national sales tax on all purchases other than food?

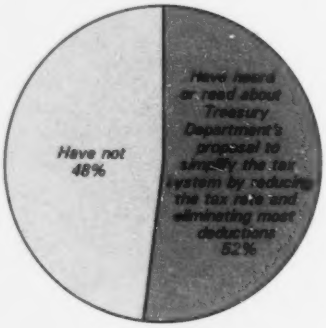
Suppose your state government must raise taxes substantially, which would be a better way to do it . . . state individual income tax or state sales tax?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, April 29-May 2, 1983.

Assessing

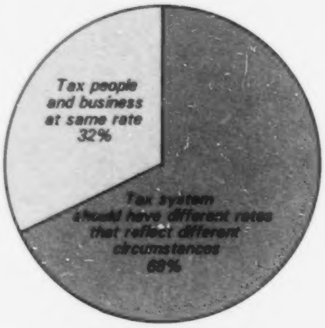
Question: Have you heard or read anything about the Treasury Department's proposal to simplify the tax system by reducing the tax rate and eliminating most deductions?



Note: A much more detailed *Los Angeles Times* question, which described the Treasury Department's plan, found that 11% had heard "a lot about this new administration tax plan," 25% had heard "some" about it, 36% "a little," and 28% "nothing."

Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 11-16, 1985.

Question: As a matter of general principle, do you think every taxpayer—whether an individual or a business—should be treated the same and taxed at the same rate, or should the tax system have different tax rates that reflect different circumstances?

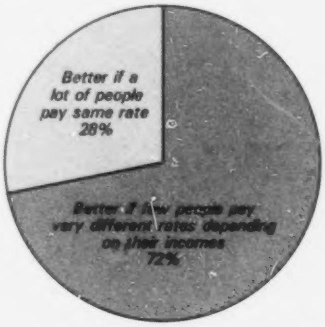


Note: Sample size = 1,005.

Source: Survey by Opinion Research Corporation for The LTV Corporation, July 9-16, 1982.

Question: The current federal income tax has 14 or 15 different tax rates starting at 11% and going all the way up to 50%. The poorest people pay the lowest tax rates, and the richest people pay the highest rates. But the administration wants to pare down the tax brackets to just three rates: 15%, 25%, and 30%.

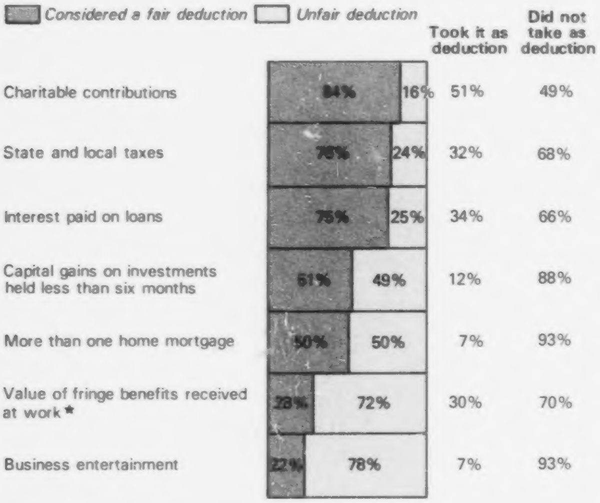
Do you think it's better if a lot of people pay the same rate of tax or do you think it's better if a few people pay very different rates depending on their incomes?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

WHAT'S FAIR, WHAT'S NOT

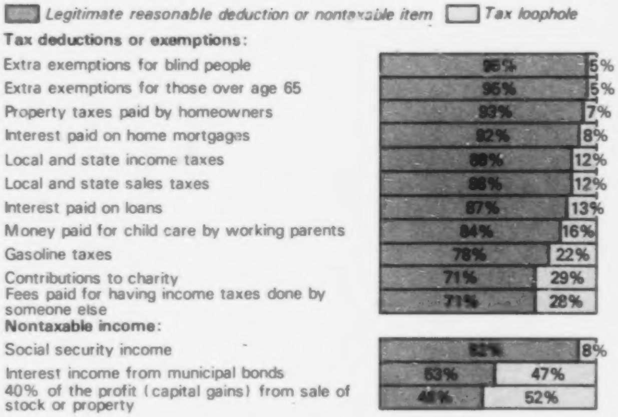
Question: Now I'm going to call off certain income tax deductions that are included in the current tax law but which would be reduced or eliminated under the administration's new tax plan. As I mention each one, I want you to tell me how fair that tax advantage is. For example, do you think it is fair or unfair to allow deductions for . . .



Note: "Not sure" calculated out. All responses were 10% or less except capital gains, which was 16%.
*Benefits like health care or inexpensive cafeteria food, or free life insurance, or parking privileges, or that kind of thing.

Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

Question: Here are some deductions and exemptions that are now allowed for federal income tax purposes, and some types of income that are *not* subject to federal income taxes. (Hand respondent card). Some people feel most or all of these are perfectly legitimate and reasonable. Others think that at least some if not all of them are tax loopholes that work to the unfair benefit of certain groups of people. Would you read down that list and for each one tell me whether or not it is perfectly reasonable for it to be deductible, or whether you think it is really a tax loophole? First . . .



Note: "Don't know" calculated out for comparison purposes. All categories 8% or less, except "Interest from municipal bonds" (17%), and "Capital gains" (19%).

Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-2), January 5-19, 1985.

the Flat Tax

✓ Keep or ✗ Eliminate . . . deduction	Harris/*BW*	NBC News	*Time*/YSW	Penn + Schoen
Charitable contributions	✓ (74-26)	✓ (67-33)		✓ (81-19)
Contributions given to a church or synagogue			✓ (76-24)	
Contributions given to other charities such as the United Way and medical and educational groups			✓ (78-22)	
Mortgage interest payments	✓ (86-14)		✓ (87-13)	
- Interest on mortgages and other loans				✓ (73-27)
Mortgage interest payments on a second house		✓ (54-46)		✗ (39-61)
State and local income taxes		✓ (61-39)		
State income and property taxes	✓ (75-25)			
State income tax			✓ (70-30)	
Local property taxes				✓ (77-23)
State and local income and sales taxes				✓ (81-19)
State and local sales tax	✓ (66-34)			
Interest payments	✗ (49-51)		✓ (54-46)	
Business expenses	✓ (51-49)			
Money spent in business by entertaining clients			✗ (12-88)	
Medical expenses	✓ (88-12)			
Employer paid benefits such as health and life insurance*		✓ (63-37)		
Health insurance				✓ (79-21)
Political contributions up to $100	✗ (36-64)			
Casualty and theft losses	✓ (71-29)			
Investment in drilling costs	✗ (39-61)			

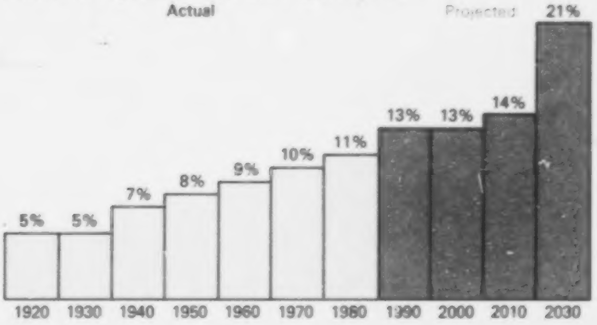
For question wording, see page 42.

✓	1. Get rid of most deductions so that everybody pays modified flat-rate tax (63%) (*Los Angeles Times*, 1985)	Keep deductions the way they are now—loopholes and all (37%)
✗	2. Favor flat-rate tax when nearly all deductions and credits would be eliminated (47%) (Opinion Research Corporation, 1984)	Oppose (53%)
✗	3. Favor flat-rate tax of 14% on all income above $8,000 a year —no exemptions or deductions allowed (37%) (Roper, 1984)	Prefer system we have now (43%) Don't know (20%)
✓	4. Favor simplified federal income tax [description of Treasury I] (75%) (Harris/*Business Week*, 1984)	Oppose (25%)
✓	5. Favor simplification of federal income tax system (71%) (NBC News, 1985)	Oppose (18%)

AMERICA THROUGH THE AGES:

GROW OLD ALONG WITH ME . . .

Percent of Population 65 years of Age and Over



Note: Percent of population 55 years of age and over for 1920 was 11%, 1930 = 12%, 1940 = 15%, 1950 = 17%, 1960 = 18%, 1970 = 19%, 1980 = 21%.

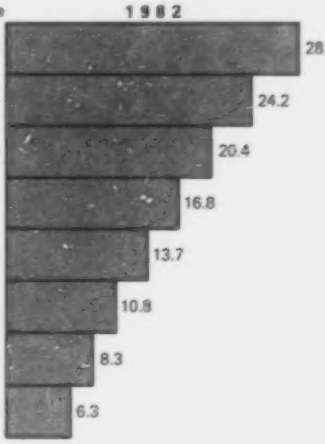
Source: For actual figures, *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*, Bureau of the Census, 1975. For projected figures, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, No. 952, Bureau of the Census, 1984.

Life Expectancy	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980
Male	53.6	58.1	60.8	65.6	66.6	67.1	70.0
Female	54.6	61.6	65.2	71.1	73.1	74.8	77.5

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1984, page 73.

THE BEST IS YET TO BE?

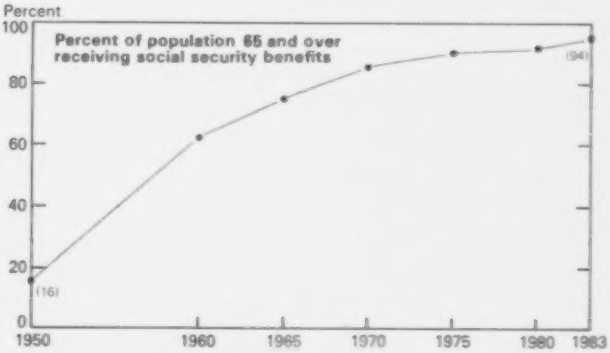
Average Number of Years of Life Remaining at Each Age:



Age	1982	1949-51	1939-41	1900-02
50	28.3 years	24.4	22.9	21.3
55	24.2	20.6	19.3	17.9
60	20.4	17.0	15.9	14.8
65	16.8	13.8	12.8	11.9
70	13.7	10.9	10.0	9.3
75	10.8	8.4	7.6	7.1
80	8.3	6.3	5.7	5.3
85	6.3	4.7	4.3	3.9

Source: For 1982, *Monthly Vital Statistics Report*, volume 33, number 9, December 20, 1984; National Center for Health Statistics, Department of Health and Human Services. For 1900-02, 1939-41, and 1949-51, unpublished data from the National Center for Health Statistics.

OLD-AGE PROTECTION



Average Monthly Social Security Benefits at Year End in Current Dollars:

	Retired worker	Spouse
1950	$ 43.86	$ 23.60
1960	74.04	38.72
1965	83.92	43.63
1970	118.10	61.19
1975	207.18	105.19
1980	341.41	171.95
1983	440.77	225.66

Note: Social security includes old-age and survivor's benefits. Disability benefits become old-age benefits at age 65. In 1983, 96% of the population 65 years and over received Medicare benefits.

Source: Social Security Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Council of Economic Advisers, in *Economic Report of the President* 1985, page 174.

Percent Change in Wages, Prices, and Social Security Benefits, 1950-1983

	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980	1970-1983	1950-1983
Median annual wages and salaries	46%	58%	104%	138%	451%
Consumer price index	23	31	112	156	312
Average monthly social security benefits for retired workers	69	60	189	273	905

Note: Median annual wages and salaries are for persons 14 years of age and over through 1977 and for persons 15 years of age and over beginning in 1978.

Source: Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce; Social Security Administration, Department of Health and Human Services; and Council of Economic Advisers, in *Economic Report of the President* 1985, page 165.

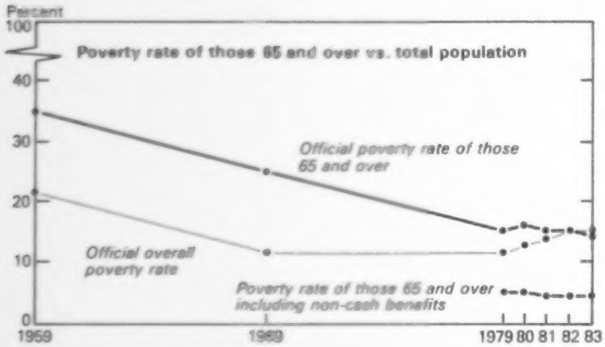
Federal Spending for the Elderly in Billions of Dollars

1971	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
44.0	81.3	92.0	95.7	103.9	116.4

1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985 est.	1986 prop.
144.2	173.3	196.0	218.4	234.8	263.6	273.1

STUDYING THE ELDERLY

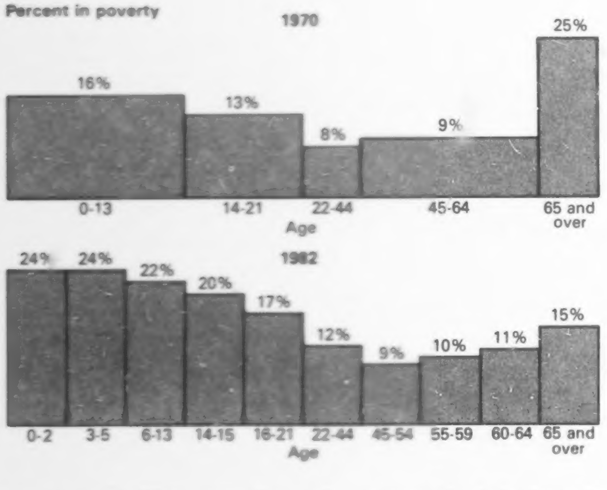
GETTING OLDER IS GETTING BETTER



	1959	1969	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Official overall poverty rate	22%	12%	12%	13%	14%	15%	15%
Official poverty rate of those 65 and over	35	25	15	16	15	15	14
Official poverty rate of those 65 and over including noncash benefits	—	—	5	5	4	4	4

Note: The poverty rate for those 65 and over including noncash benefits is calculated on the "market value" concept which takes into consideration "in-kind" services (food stamps, Medicare, etc.) to the poor when calculating poverty rate. Official poverty rate including noncash benefits is not available for 1969 and earlier.

Source: *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1984, pages 471, 474, and 478.

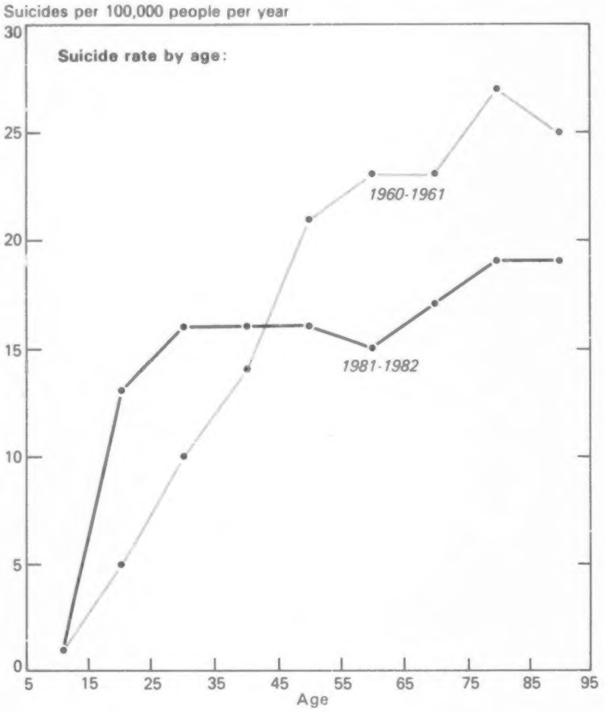


Source: *Money Income and Poverty Status of Families and Persons in the United States: 1982. Current Population Reports*, Series P-60, Number 86, December 1972; *Current Population Reports*, Series P-60, Number 140, July 1983; Bureau of the Census.

Percent of People 65 Years and Over Below the Poverty Level Who Are:

	1959	1969	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
White	87%	85%	79%	79%	77%	77%	77%
Black	13	14	20	20	21	22	21
Spanish origin	NA	NA	4	5	4	4	4
Male	NA	34	30	28	28	29	29
Female	NA	66	70	72	72	71	71

Source: *Current Population Reports*, Series P-60 Nos. 119, 138, 140, and 145, Bureau of the Census.



Suicide rate by age

Age:	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54
1960-61	1	5	10	14	21
1981-82	1	13	16	16	16

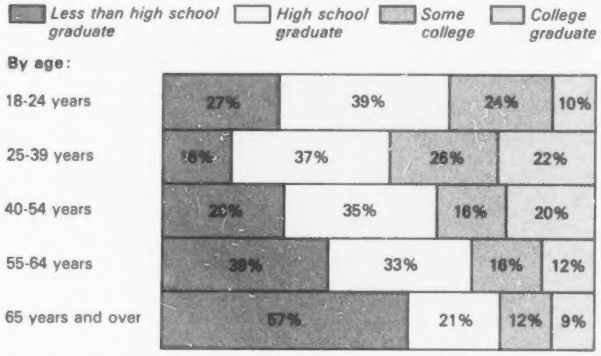
Age:	55-64	65-74	75-84	85 and over
1960-61	23	23	27	25
1981-82	15	17	19	19

Source: *Vital Statistics of the United States*, vol. II, part A, 1960 and 1961; *Monthly Vital Statistics Reports*, vol. 31(13), October 5, 1983, National Center for Health Statistics, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (for 1983), Department of Health and Human Services.

The Times They Are A Changin'

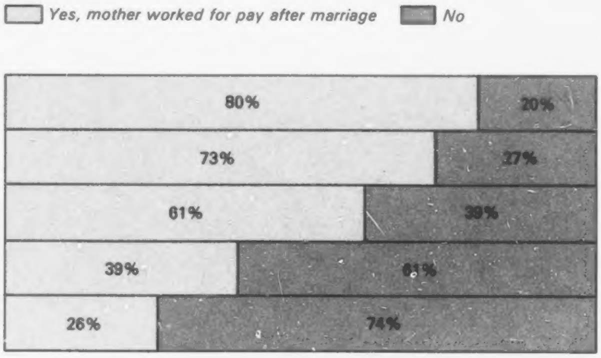
EDUCATION

Question: What is the highest grade in elementary school or high school that you finished and got credit for?



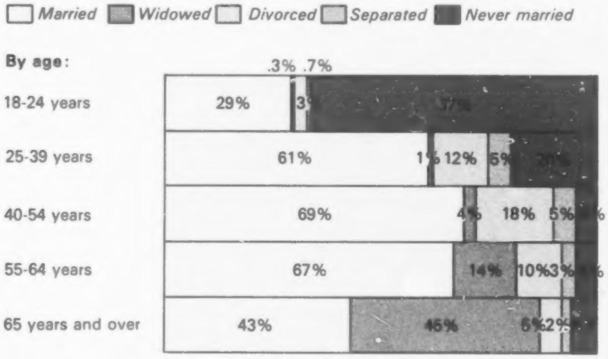
WORKING MOTHERS

Question: Did your mother ever work for pay for as long as a year after she was married?



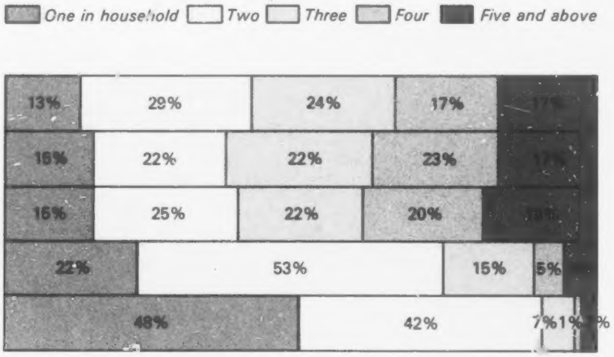
MARRIAGE

Question: Are you currently married, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?



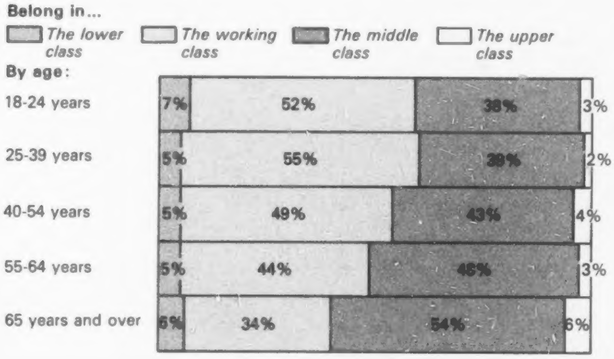
Note: *Less than one-half of 1%.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE



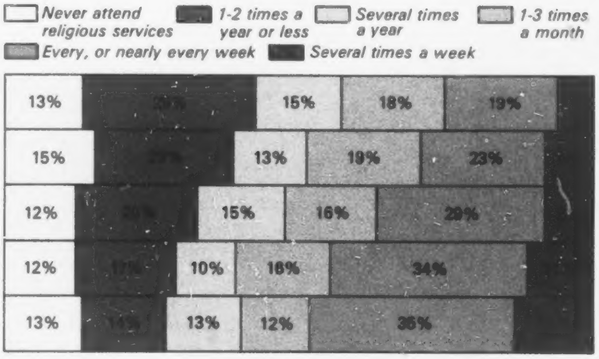
CLASS

Question: If you were asked to use one of four names for your social class, which would you say you belong in: the lower class, the working class, the middle class, or the upper class?



CHURCHGOING

Question: How often do you attend religious services?



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1982, 1983, and 1984 combined.

OPINION ROUNDUP

Growing Old Gracefully, Contentedly

The attitudinal data shown in the next ten pages provide a portrait of the elderly in America. In these pages, the attitudes of the elderly are compared to those of younger age cohorts.

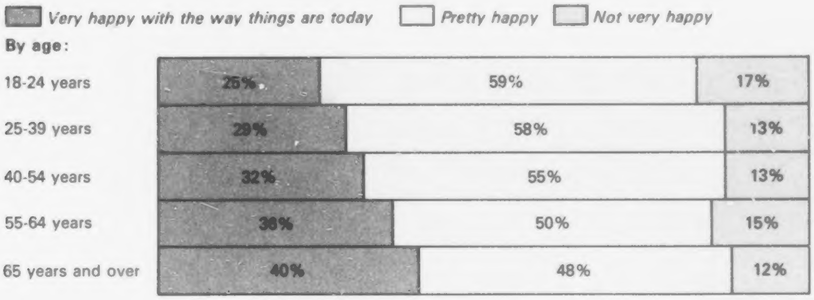
The data on the next three pages correspond nicely to the demographic data shown on pages 30 and 31. The demographic data show that the elderly *as a group* are doing reasonably well. The attitudinal data confirm this. The elderly are not pessimistic about their lives in general or their financial situation. There is a little less satisfaction with health among the elderly but nowhere near the concern the public estimates for them. Of course this generally positive outlook is not shared by all. Fourteen percent of the elderly are in poverty, representing 3.7 million adults. Even including in-kind benefits, such as Medicare and food stamps, there are still about one million elderly Americans who fall below the poverty line. Though most survey samples are too small to allow us to look at age and income breaks for those over 65, a few do. On these pages we note data from a Harris survey for the National Council on the Aging, which examines attitudes of elderly subgroups by income and by race. As expected, the elderly with lower incomes and elderly Americans who are Black and Hispanic, are not as sanguine about their prospects as the elderly as a group.

On most policy questions the attitudes of elderly Americans are remarkably consistent with the attitudes of younger Americans. There are substantial differences where formative experiences have shaped attitudes the elderly have carried with them throughout their lives. On questions of civil liberties, race relations, social mores, and cultural values, the elderly's attitudes are significantly different from their younger counterparts.

In the next issue we will look at the political clout of this growing group. We will also examine the notion of an intergenerational conflict between those who receive social security, and those who pay for it.

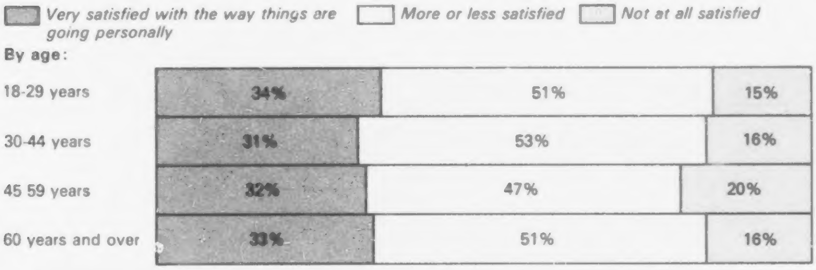
KHK

Question: Taken all together, how would you say things are these days—would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1982, 1983, and 1984 combined.

Question: How satisfied are you with the way things are going for you *personally*? Are you very satisfied, more or less satisfied, or not at all satisfied?



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-9), September 15-22, 1984.

THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES

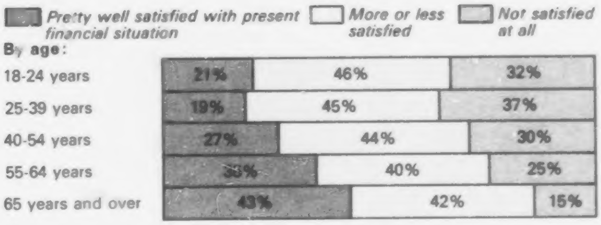
Question: People feel differently about what years are the best time of a person's life. Which of these do *you* think are the best time of life?

By age:	Childhood	Teen-age years	The twenties	The thirties	The forties	The fifties	Retirement years
18-29 years	22%	29%	42%	9%	4%	1%	3%
30-44 years	22%	21%	28%	31%	13%	4%	5%
45-59 years	17%	16%	24%	22%	20%	13%	8%
60 years and over	14%	14%	19%	20%	16%	11%	31%

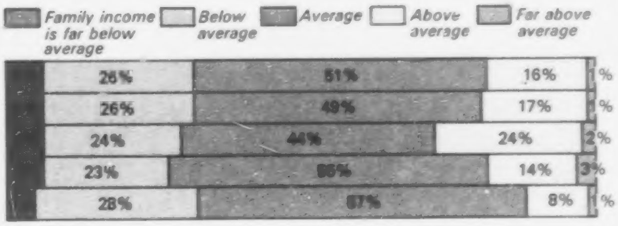
Note: Multiple responses per respondent. Don't know/no answer (not shown) ranged from 4-8%.
Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-4), March 17-24, 1984.

Personal Finances: The Golden Years

Question: We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. So far as you and your family are concerned, would you say that you are pretty well satisfied with your present financial situation, more or less satisfied, or not satisfied at all?



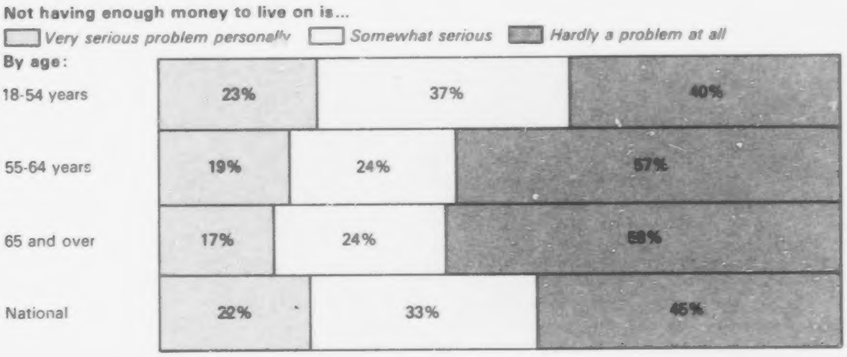
Question: Compared with American families in general, would you say your family income is far below average, below average, average, about average, or far above average?

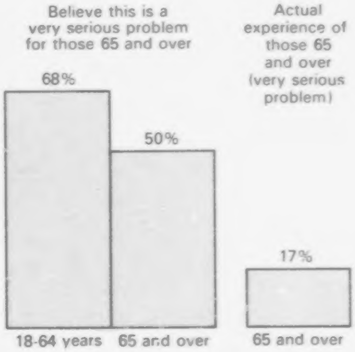


Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1982, 1983, and 1984 combined.

Question: Now I'm going to read you some problems that other people have mentioned to us. For each, would you tell me whether it is a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or hardly a problem at all for you personally?

And how serious a problem would you say (Read each item) is for most people over 65 these days—a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or hardly a problem at all for most people over 65?

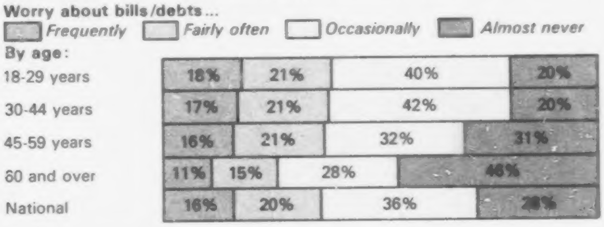




Note: There were substantial differences by race and income for those over 65. Thirteen percent of whites over 65 said "not having enough money to live on" was a very serious problem for them; 42% of Blacks felt that way, and 52% of Hispanics did. A third of those 65 and over with incomes less than $5,000 said it was a serious problem for them, compared to 17% for those with incomes between $5,000 and $9,999, 9% of those with incomes between $10,000 and $19,999. Only 5% of those 65 and older with incomes of $20,000 or more felt that way.

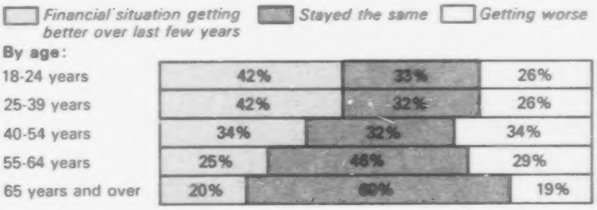
Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for the National Council on the Aging, June 15-July 31, 1981.

Question: Please look at this list (Card shown respondent) and tell me for each item how often you do it or feel that way—frequently, fairly often, occasionally, or almost never.



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-7), July 7-14, 1984.

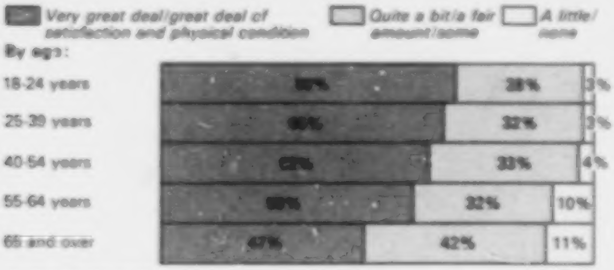
Question: During the last few years, has your financial situation been getting better, worse, or has it stayed the same?



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1982, 1983, and 1984 combined.

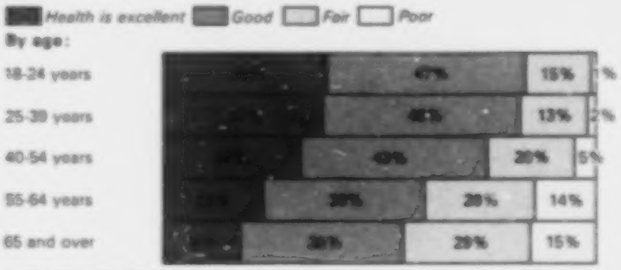
When You Have Your Health

Question: For each area of life I am going to name, tell me the number that shows how much *satisfaction* you get from that area . . . your health and physical condition.



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1982, 1983, and 1984.

Question: Would you say your own health, in general, is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

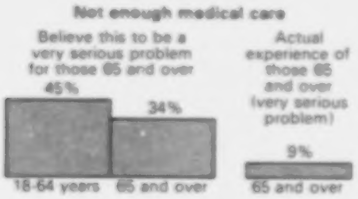


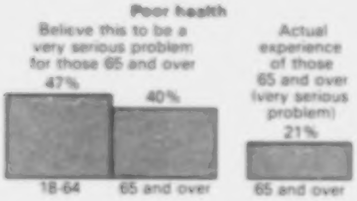
Note: In response to another question from the combined 1980, '83, and '84 NORC General Social Surveys, 45% of those 65 and over said they had not been hospitalized during the last five years, 20% had been hospitalized both in the prior four years and in the last year.

Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1980, 1982, and 1984.

Question: Now I'm going to read you some problems that other people have mentioned to us. For each, would you tell me whether it is a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or hardly a problem at all for you personally?

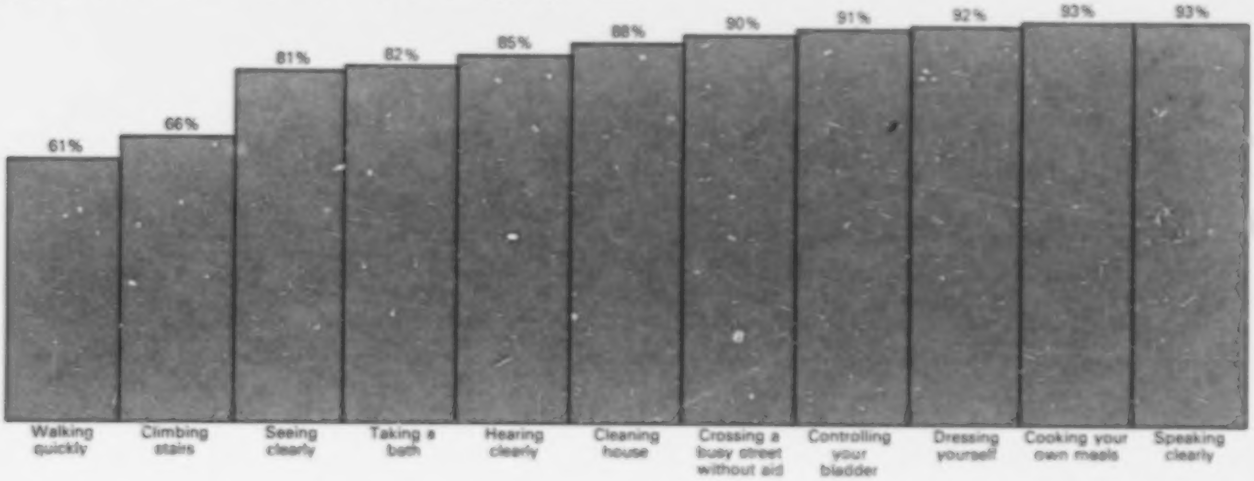
And how serious a problem would you say (Read each item) is for most people over 65 these days—a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, or hardly a problem at all for most people over 65?





Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for the National Council on the Aging, June 15-July 31, 1981.

Percent 60 and Over Who Have no Difficulty in Performing Daily Activities

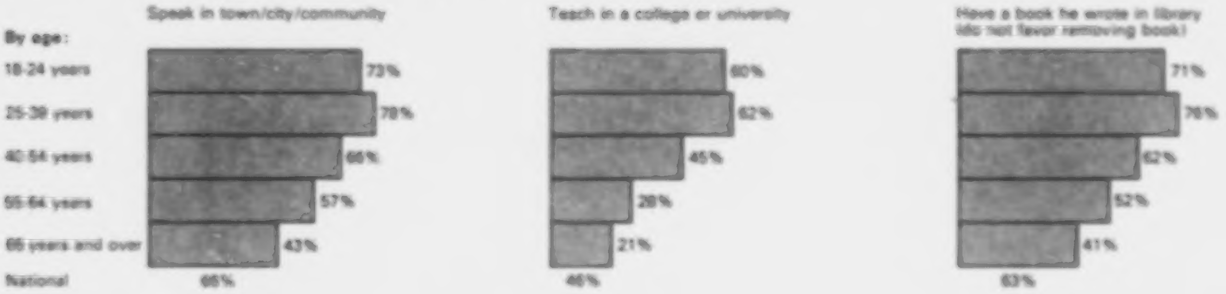


Note: Sample size = 481 adults 60 years and older.

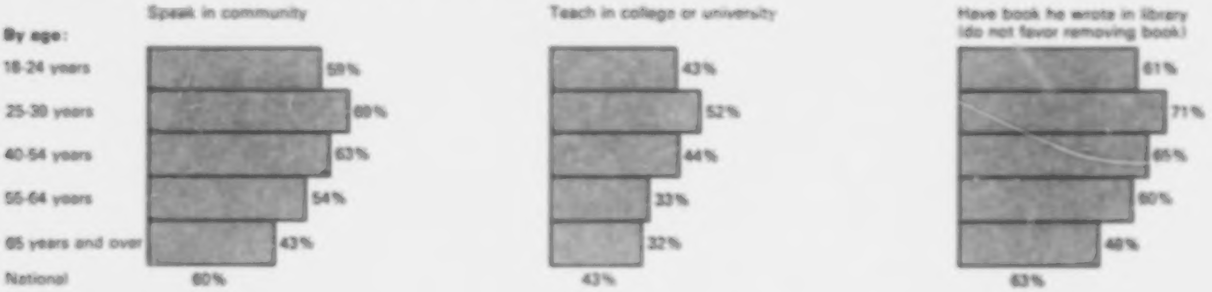
Source: Survey by Research & Forecasts, Inc., for Americana Health Care Corporation, March-April, 1980.

Signs of Their Times:

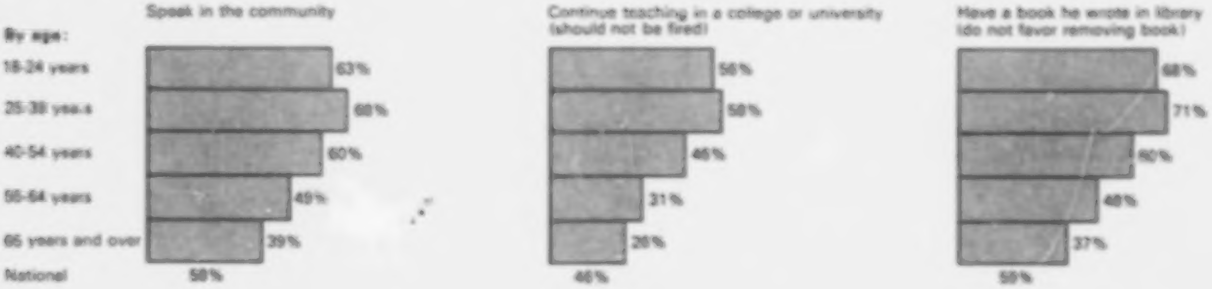
1. Allow person who is against all churches and religion to...



2. Allow person who believes that Blacks are genetically inferior to...



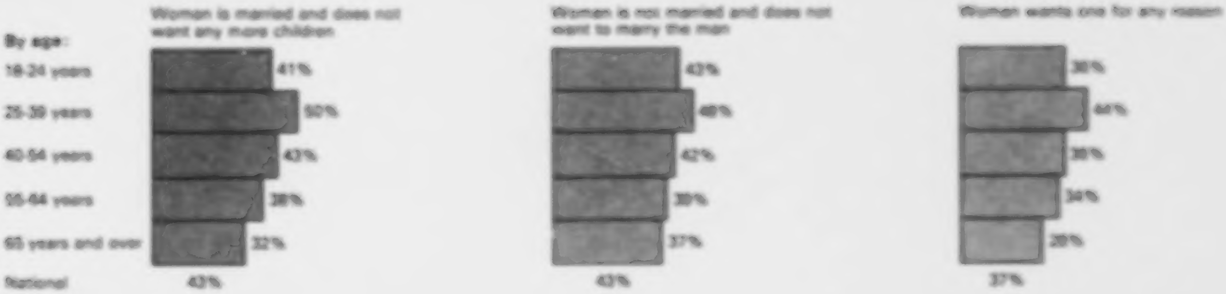
3. Allow an admitted Communist to...



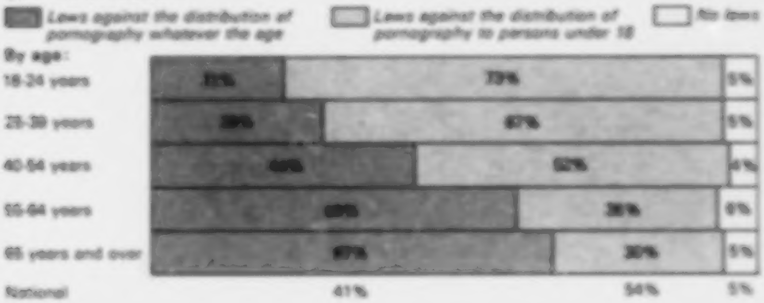
Note: All the data on pages 36-39 are from the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys. 1. There are always some people whose ideas are considered bad or dangerous by other people. For instance, somebody who is against all churches and religion. . . . If such a person wanted to make a speech in your (city/town/community) against churches and religion, should he be allowed to speak, or not? . . . Should such a person be allowed to teach in a college or university, or not? . . . If some people in your community suggested that a book he wrote against churches and religion should be taken out of your public library, would you favor removing the book, or not? (1980, 1982, 1984 combined.) 2. Or, consider a person who believes that Blacks are genetically inferior. If such a person wanted to make a speech in your community claiming that Blacks are inferior, should he be allowed to speak, or not? . . . Should such a person be allowed to teach in a college or university, or not? . . . If some people in your community suggested that a book he wrote which said Blacks are inferior should be taken out of your public library, would you favor removing this book, or not? (1980, '82, '84 combined.) 3. Now, I should like to ask you some questions about a man who admits he is a Communist. Suppose this admitted Communist wanted to make a speech in your community. Should he be allowed to speak, or not? . . . Suppose he is teaching in a college. Should he be fired or not? . . . Suppose he wrote a book which is in your public library. Somebody in your community suggests that the book should be removed from the library. Would you favor removing it, or not? (1980, '82, '84 combined.) 4. Please tell me whether or not you think it should be possible for a pregnant woman to obtain a legal abortion if . . . READ EACH STATEMENT AND CIRCLE ONE CODE FOR EACH. . . . She is married and does not want any more children? . . . She is not married and does not want to marry the man? . . . The woman wants it for any reason? (1982, '83, '84 combined.) 5. Which of these statements comes closest to your feelings about pornography laws? READ FIRST THREE CATEGORIES ONLY. CIRCLE ONLY ONE CODE. There should be laws against the distribution of pornography whatever the age. . . . There should be laws against the distribution of pornography to persons under the age of 18. . . . There should be no laws forbidding the distribution of pornography. (1980, '83, '84 combined.) 6. The next questions are about pornography—books, movies, magazines, and photographs that show or describe sex activities. I'm going to read some opinions about the effects of looking at or reading such sexual materials. As I read each one, please tell me if you think sexual materials do or do not have that effect. READ EACH ITEM. CODE ONE FOR EACH. . . . Sexual materials lead to the break-

Social Attitudes

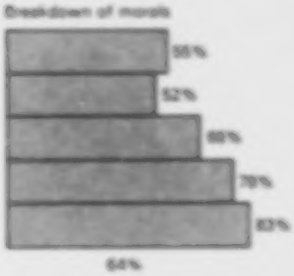
4. Yes, abortion should be legal if...



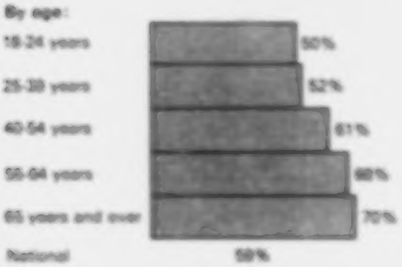
5. There should be...



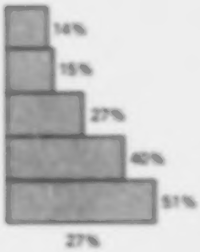
6. Yes, sexual materials lead to...



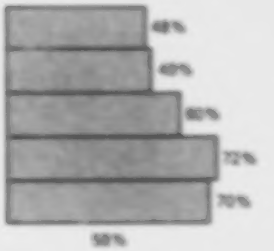
7. Communism is the worst form of government



8. There should be law against interracial marriage

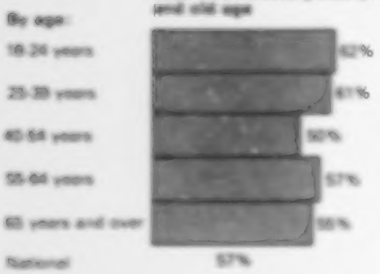


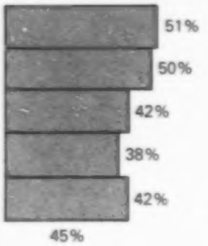
9. Agree, Blacks shouldn't push themselves where they are not wanted

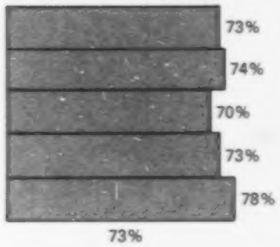


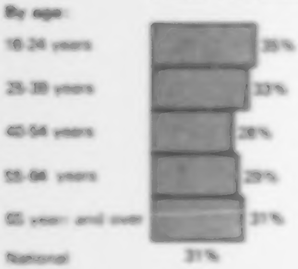
down of morals. (1980, '83, '84 combined.) 7. Thinking about all the different kinds of government in the world today, which of these statements comes closest to how you feel about Communism as a form of government? CODE ONE . . . . It's the worst kind of all. . . . . It's bad, but no worse than some others. . . . . It's all right for some countries. . . . . It's a good form of government. . . . . Don't know. . . . . No answer. . . . . (1980, '82, '84 combined.) 8. Do you think there should be laws against marriages between blacks and whites? (1980, '82, '84 combined.) 9. Here are some opinions other people have expressed in connection with Black-white relations. Which statement on the card comes closest to how you, yourself, feel? HAND CARD . . . . The first one is . . . . Blacks shouldn't push themselves where they're not wanted. (Response shown = "Agree strongly" + "Agree slightly.") (1980, '82, '84 combined.) 10. On these cards are some opinions about the government and the economy. For each one I'd like you to tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. . . . . It is the responsibility of government to meet everybody's needs, even in the case of sickness, poverty, unemployment, and old age. ("Agree strongly/Agree somewhat" shown.) (1984) 11. Look at card PP. In general, some people think that it is the responsibility of the government in Washington to see to it that people have help paying for doctors and hospital bills. Others think that these matters are not the responsibility of the federal government and that people should take care of these things themselves. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this? (On a scale of "1" to "5," "1" (Government should help) & "2" were combined.) (1983, '84 combined.) 12. For some time there have been discussions about how concerned the government should be about the social welfare of the people. We have listed here two different opinions. With which opinion do you agree the most? READ STATEMENTS A & B. CIRCLE ONE CODE. A. Our system of social services goes much too far. It takes too much care of people and deprives them of too much individual responsibility. B. Our system of social services is on the right track. It provides security for the elderly, the sick, and other people in distress without depriving people of individual responsibility. (1984) 13. I'd like to talk with you about issues some people tell us are important. Please look at card NN. Some people think that the government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans; they are at Point "1" on this card. Other people think it is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself; they are at Point "5." Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on

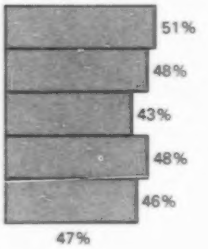
Getting There and Staying

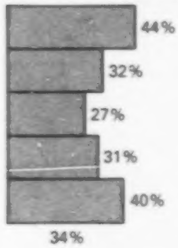

10. Government has the responsibility to meet everyone's needs even in the case of sickness, poverty, unemployment, and old age

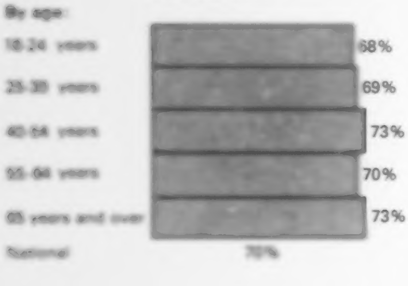

11. Government has the responsibility to see that people have help in paying doctor and hospital bills

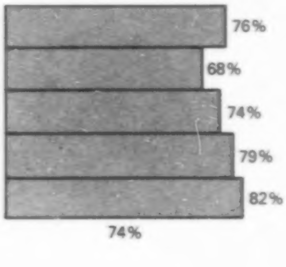

12. Present system of social services is on the right track. It provides security without depriving people of individual responsibility

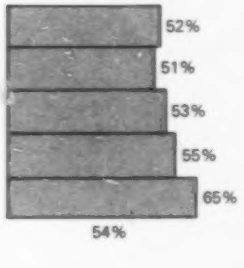

13. Government should do everything possible to improve living standards of poor Americans


14. Government should do something to reduce income differences between the rich and the poor


15. Personal income should not be limited solely to work, everyone should get what they need to provide a decent life

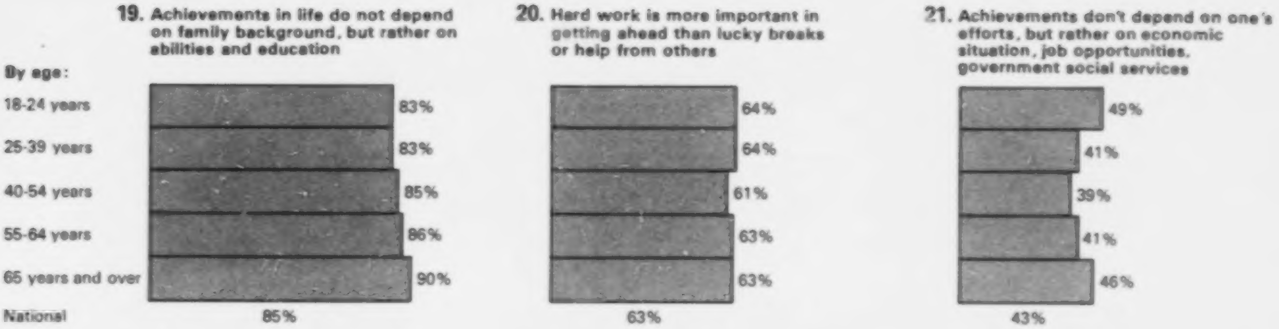

16. A person's social standing depends on whether he belongs to the upper or lower class


17. Differences in social standing are acceptable because they reflect what people made out of their opportunities


18. Social classes in this country are justified

this? (Points "1" & "2" combined, shown.) (1983, '84 combined.) 14. Some people think that the government in Washington ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, perhaps by raising the taxes of wealthy families or by giving income assistance to the poor. Others think that the government should not concern itself with reducing this income difference between the rich and the poor. Here is a card with a scale from "1" to "7." Think of a score of "1" as meaning that the government ought to reduce the income differences between the rich and the poor, and a score of "7" meaning that the government should not concern itself with reducing income differences. What score between "1" and "7" comes closest to the way you feel? (CIRCLE ONE) ("1," "2," and "3" combined.) (1980, '83, '84 combined.) 15. Here are some different opinions about social differences in this country. Please tell me for each one whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. READ EACH STATEMENT. CIRCLE ONE CODE FOR EACH. . . . Personal income should not be determined solely by one's work. Rather, everybody should get what he/she needs to provide a decent life for his/her family. (Strongly/somewhat agree shown.) (1984) 16. . . . In the United States, traditional divisions between owners and workers still remain. A person's social standing depends on whether he/she belongs to the upper or lower class. (Strongly/somewhat agree shown.) (1984) 17. . . . Differences in social standing between people are acceptable because they basically reflect what people made out of the opportunities they had. (Strongly/somewhat agree shown.) (1984) 18. . . . All in all, I think social differences in this country are justified. (Strongly/somewhat agree shown.) (1984) 19. . . . America has an open society. What one achieves in life no longer depends on one's family background, but on the abilities one has and the education one acquires. (Strongly/somewhat agree shown.) (1984) 20. Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important? (1980, '82, '84 combined.) 21. Here are different opinions about social differences in this country. Please tell me for each one whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. READ EACH STATEMENT. CIRCLE ONE CODE FOR EACH. . . . What one gets in life hardly depends at all on one's own efforts, but rather on the economic situation, job opportunities, union agreements, and the social services provided by the government. (Strongly/somewhat agree shown.) (1984)

There: The Generations Agree



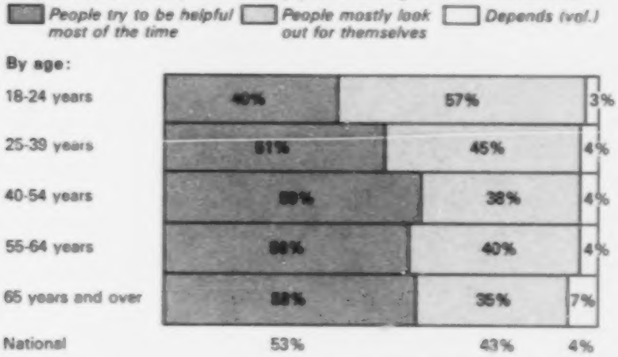
19. Achievements in life do not depend on family background, but rather on abilities and education

20. Hard work is more important in getting ahead than lucky breaks or help from others

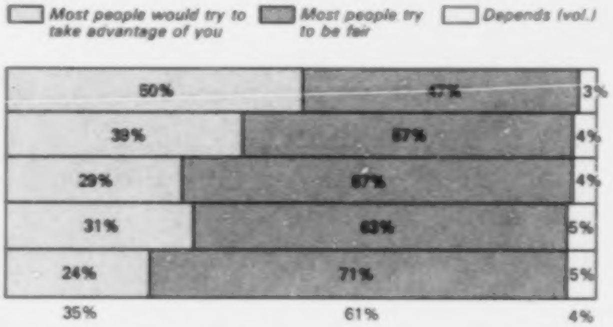
21. Achievements don't depend on one's efforts, but rather on economic situation, job opportunities, government social services

AGE MELLOWS CYNICISM

Question: Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful, or that they are mostly just looking out for themselves?

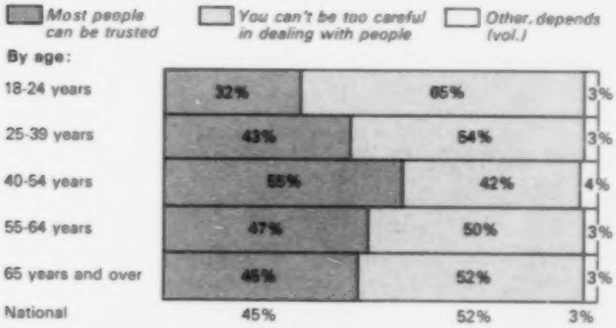


Question: Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or would they try to be fair?



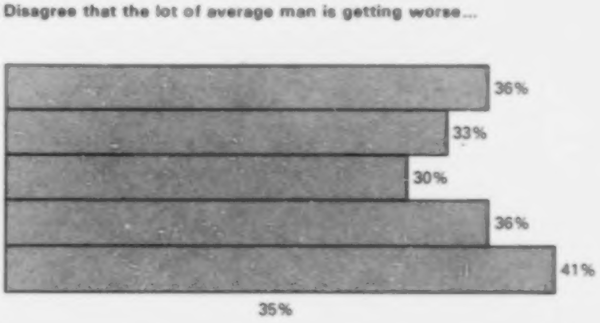
Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1980, 1983, 1984 combined.

Question: Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1980, 1983, 1984 combined.

Question: Now I'd like to get your opinions on a number of different things. In spite of what some people say, the lot (situation/condition) of the average man is getting worse, not better. Do you more or less agree with that, or more or less disagree?

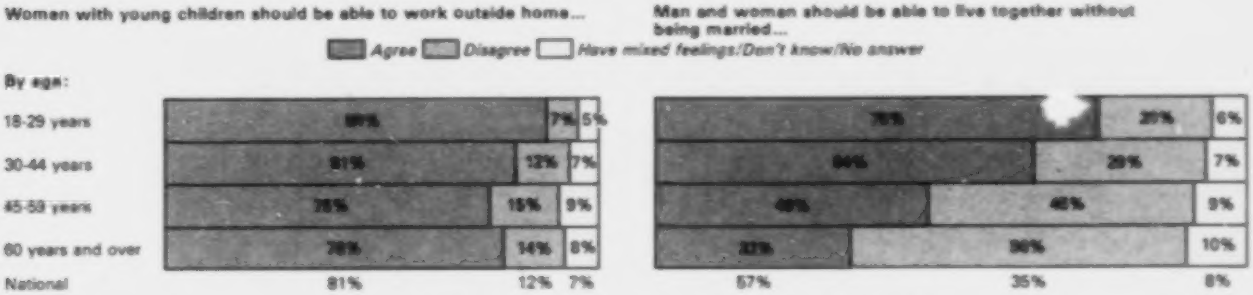


Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1980, 1982, 1984 combined.

Defining Woman's Place

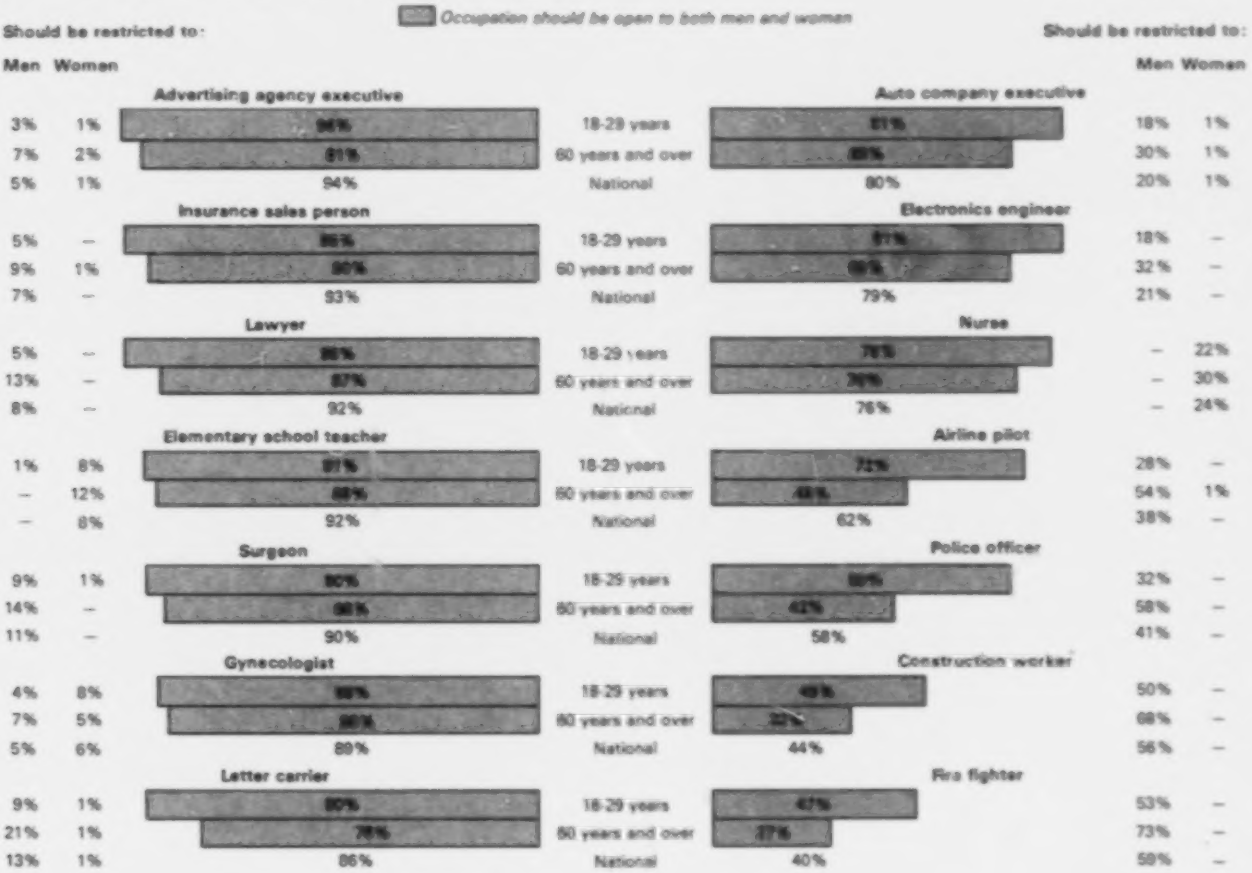
OUTSIDE THE HOME . . . AND INSIDE

Question: Now here are some statements about marriage, work, divorce, etc. (CARD SHOWN RESPONDENT) Would you read each one and tell me whether on balance you tend more to agree with it or disagree with it? . . . There is no reason why women with young children shouldn't work outside the home if they choose to. . . . There is no reason why a man and a woman shouldn't live together without being married if they choose to do so.



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-2), January 7-21, 1984.

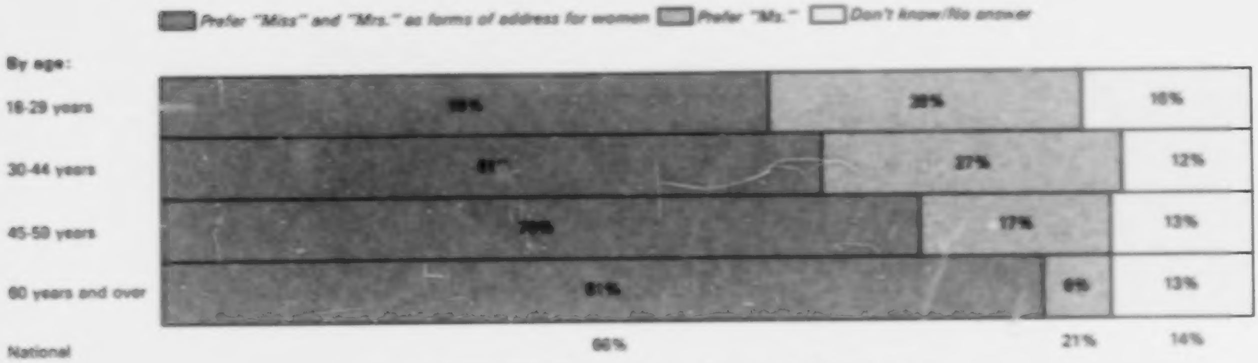
Question: Here is a list of some different kinds of occupations. (CARD SHOWN RESPONDENT) Would you read down that list, and for each one tell me whether you think it is the kind of occupation that should be pretty much restricted to men, pretty much restricted to women, or equally open to both men and women?



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 83-10), October 29-November 3, 1983.

JUST DON'T CALL ME MADAM

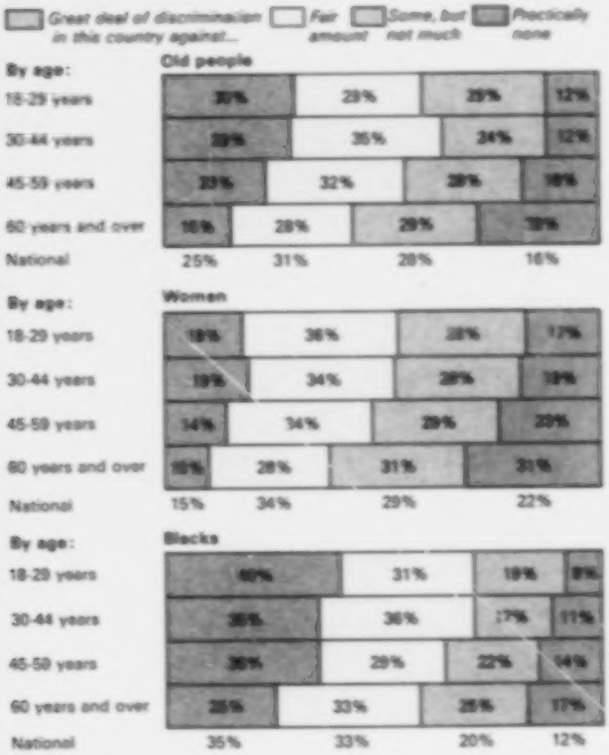
Question: Recently there has been a move to change the form of address for women from Miss and Mrs. to Ms. Which form of address do you like best for women—Miss and Mrs. or Ms?



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 83-9), September 24-October 1, 1983.

DISCRIMINATION

Question: Here is a list of some different types of people. (CARD SHOWN RESPONDENT) Would you go down that list and for each one tell me whether you think there is a great deal of discrimination against that group in this country, or a fair amount of discrimination, or some discrimination but not much, or practically none?

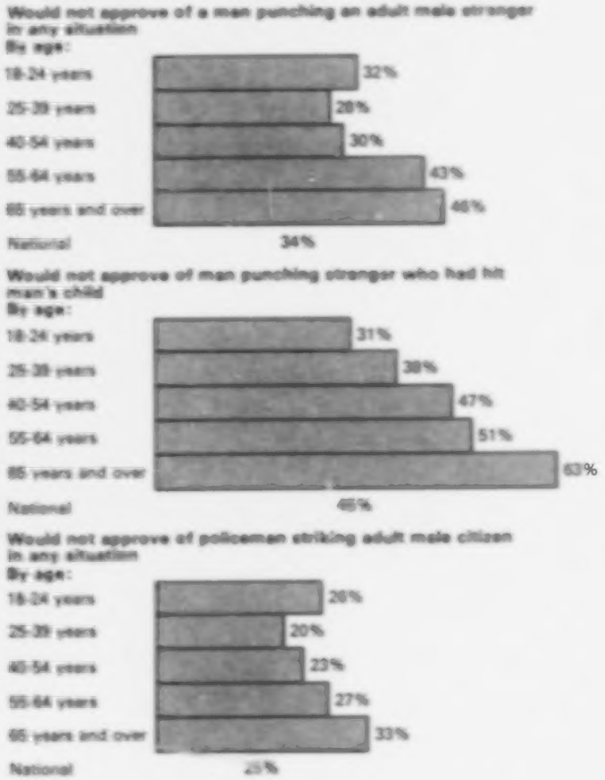


Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-3), February 11-25, 1984.

WARM HEARTS

Question: Are there any situations that you can imagine in which you would approve of a man punching an adult male stranger? . . . Would you approve of a man punching a stranger who had hit the man's child after the child accidentally damaged the stranger's car?

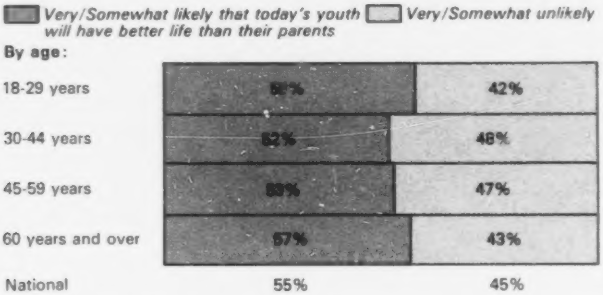
Are there any situations you can imagine in which you would approve of a policeman striking an adult male citizen?



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, 1980, 1983, 1984 combined.

CHANCES OF ACHIEVING GOOD LIFE

Question: In America each generation has tried to have a better life than their parents, with a better living standard, better homes, a better education, and so on. How likely do you think it is that today's youth will have a better life than their parents—very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely?



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 83-2), January 8-22, 1983.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

*Voting Patterns and Electoral Clout of Older Americans

*Social Security: Intergenerational Warfare Between Young and Old?

Question wording (for top of page 29)

Question: Would you favor keeping each of these deductions or would you favor getting rid of it to make it possible to lower the basic federal tax rate . . . deductions for medical expenses, home mortgage interest, charitable contributions, state and local income and property taxes, casualty and theft losses, state and local sales taxes, interest paid on installment and credit card bills, employee business expenses, being able to deduct investment in drilling costs for oil and natural gas, credit for political contributions up to $100? (Harris/*Business Week*)

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about some of the recent proposals to simplify the federal income tax system. Do you favor or oppose eliminating federal income tax deductions for charitable contributions, state and local income tax, mortgage interest on second homes? (NBC News)*

I'm going to read to you some of the deductions that are proposed being eliminated under this (flat tax) plan, so that you will no longer be able to take them off your taxes. For each, please tell me whether you favor eliminating the deduction or whether you favor keeping it . . . mortgage interest payments on the house in which a person lives, mortgage interest payments on a second house, interest payments on credit cards, auto loans and the like, contributions given to a church or synagogue, contributions given to other charities, such as the United Way and medical and educational groups, income taxes that are paid to the state, property taxes that are paid at the local level, money spent by people in business to entertain clients? (*Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White)

Here are some items that would be taxed under the new system. For each one, please tell me whether you think that it should be taxed by the federal government or excluded from taxation . . . monies paid in state and local income and sales taxes, monies paid to local governments for local property taxes, charitable contributions to educational, religious and other charitable organizations, health insurance, interest on mortgages and other loans? (Penn + Schoen for the Committee for a Responsible Tax Policy)

Note: *Another NBC News question asked if respondents favored "including employer paid benefits, such as health insurance and life insurance, as individual taxable income." For all four organizations, "Don't know" has been calculated out. Twice in the NBC News categories, "Don't know" exceeded 10% (second home = 17%, state and local income taxes = 13%). In Penn + Schoen, "Don't know" exceeded 10% three times (state and local income and sales taxes = 13%, local property taxes = 13%, interest on mortgages and other loans = 12%).

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, November 26-29, 1984, NBC News, February 3-4, 1985, *Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White, December 10-12, 1984, and Penn + Schoen for the Committee for a Responsible Tax Policy, January 2-5, 1985.

Question wording:

(for bottom of page 29) 1. The government often lowers taxes to encourage a certain kind of activity that is considered beneficial—like giving to charity, say, or investing in business—and it raises taxes to discourage some other kind of activity that is considered harmful—like buying liquor or importing foreign products that compete with American labor. But sometimes powerful interests arrange to put into the tax law unfair "loophole" deductions which benefit only themselves. What do you think should be done about deductions? Do you think it is better to get rid of most of them so that everybody pays a modified flat-rate tax, or do you think it's better to keep deductions the way they are now—loopholes and all? (*Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985) 2. A number of proposals have been made to change the federal income tax to a flat-rate tax, where everybody—regardless of the amount of income—would pay the same rate. In this proposal, the single rate would be much lower than the present top rate of 50 percent, perhaps somewhere between 15 and 20 percent. With this flat-rate tax, however, nearly all the deductions and credits now given to taxpayers would be eliminated. In general, would you be for or against such a flat-rate tax? (Opinion Research Corporation, April 13-19, 1984) 3. There has been a lot of talk about changing the income tax laws to make the system fairer to everyone as well as make the forms easier to fill out. One proposal is to do away with all exemptions and deductions and impose on everyone a flat tax of 14 percent on all income above $8,000 a year. Would you be in favor of a flat income tax of 14 percent a year, or do you prefer the income tax system we have now? (Roper Organization, September 15-22, 1984) 4. The Reagan administration is working on a plan to simplify federal taxes. Under the plan, the federal income tax would be simplified by going to a basic tax of 15 percent or 25 percent for most people, with a maximum tax of 35 percent for those in the highest income brackets. But many of the current deductions people now take off their taxes would be eliminated. Deductions would be allowed for home mortgage payments, charitable contributions, and a few other items. No one would pay taxes if their income is below $11,800. Would you favor or oppose this simplified federal income tax? (Harris/*Business Week*, November 26-29, 1984) 5. Recently there has been much talk about simplifying the federal income tax system. In general, do you favor or oppose the idea of federal income tax simplification? (NBC News, February 3-4, 1985)

by Michael J. Robinson

The Media in Campaign '84: Part II Wingless, Toothless, and Hopeless

Reagan's age, Reagan's gaffes, Reagan's ties to the extreme right, Reagan's running mate. By the end of Campaign '84, these network evening news stories were as familiar as motels in Breezewood, Pa. But in the end these stories didn't matter. The networks never managed to tarnish Reagan's image or diminish his lead. Why was that?

In our last article, Maura Clancey and I looked at one aspect of network news performance during last year's campaign: how the candidates were covered. Our conclusion was that Reagan/Bush lost out to Mondale/Ferraro in terms of news spin and news agenda: The networks had nipped harder at the Republicans than the Democrats in every respect except evaluation of the horse race. (*Public Opinion*, December/January 1985)

The focus of this article, Part II of our campaign coverage evaluation, is different. Instead of documenting the network coverage of the candidates per se, this second look explains why the networks seemed so ineffectual, and asks whether their ineffectuality was unique to 1984 and the Reagan presidency. It *is* possible that the media coverage of the 1984 general election says more about the networks and the news media than it does about Ronald Reagan and his special relationship with the American people.

Press and Opinion: A Hollywood-Style Relationship

The aggregate statistics imply that the network newspeople had practically no meaningful impact on the electorate, especially if one looks only at the spin variable—innuendo and comment about each candidate's leadership qualities (what most people think of when they think of "bias"). During the general campaign, as we measured spin, Bush fared worst (−40); Reagan was third (−33); Mondale eked out a +1; and Ferraro had the most positive spin—a total of +4.[1]

Few could deny, however, that Reagan wound up more favorably regarded than Mondale. The same holds true for Bush: throughout the campaign, Bush maintained higher favorability ratings than his opponent did despite Bush's dismal press spin score—the worst of all candidates. (Ferraro's was the best—at least in September and October.) So, the major determinant of public opinion clearly was something other than network spin.

These aggregate measurements may, however, conceal something. What happens when we look not at the big picture, but at weekly snapshots of network spin, correlated with measures of each candidate's public image? Using Patrick Caddell's "thermometer score" (a gauge of the public's attitude toward the quality of the candidate) and our own spin measure, we found that the relationship over time was almost as weak as the aggregate measures had implied.

For Ferraro, the correlation between spin and image was actually negative (−.33), which means when Ferraro's press was bad, her image was good and vice versa. That correlation probably does not mean that the public rejected the network news line on Ferraro, but may mean that, by October, the networks decided Ferraro was so far behind there was no point in doing any more negative spinning about her. Ferraro was, after all, at best a losing vice-presidential nominee. The *negative* correlation 'twixt Ferraro's press and Ferraro's image suggests, in fact, that in some circumstances the polls influence the news media more than the other way around. Neither Bush nor Mondale seemed to suffer (nor to benefit) much from their week-to-week press spin;[2] the correlation between their spin and image was statistically insignificant. For Mondale, the figure was −.07; for Bush +.18.

Only Reagan seemed to show any positive relationship between his spin measure and the Caddell thermometer score: When his press got worse, so did his favorability rating, at least slightly. But for Reagan, too, the statistical tie between spin and image was negligible

(+.32). Even so, that figure provides one of the most intriguing results in our research: the supposedly impervious candidate was the only one of the four who tended to lose support when his press got bad.

In truth, the relationship between Reagan's press image and his popular image had as much to do with statistical vaguenesses as with media impact. If one looks with one's eyes, instead of one's computer, at Reagan's press scores and his favorability scores during the general campaign, one finds a final form of evidence to support the basic premise that the news media had little effect in the general campaign of 1984.

Table 1 contains our weekly reading of both press measures—Reagan's spin score (innuendos about his competence, availability, decency, consistency) and his viability score (references to his electability or standing in the race). Table 1 also contains a third line—the Caddell favorability measure as it was assessed, time after time, during the campaign.

There is some congruity here. On the week when Reagan had his best press score, he did his best at incurring favor with his public. And when his press was at its worst (after the first debate), his thermometer score was at its lowest. But Reagan's press measures jumped up and down as violently as March temperatures in Washington. His favorability scores, on the other hand, varied little more than year-round temperatures in Santa Barbara. And, of course, Reagan's favorability scores were always positive, while his press scores were mostly negative.

There *is* a relationship between these lines, but it isn't much sturdier than a two-star Hollywood marriage. So, for the Final Four 1984 candidates, the relationship between press and public opinion was weak. Having lost the war for spin and agenda on network evening news, the Republicans won most everything else. Having won the war for spin, the Democrats won Minnesota.

Truths about Network News

How is it possible that a nation that relies so heavily on network news for monitoring presidential elections could seem so impervious to news spin or even news agenda? Apart from the Democrats' explanation—that Reagan himself is the answer—let's concentrate on two other factors: what the networks *didn't* do or say in this election, and what the electorate generally fails to do in most elections.

Once one has set aside the innuendos about the candidates' behavior and motives, it becomes fairly clear that in 1984 the networks did not do nearly enough to overcome real events, real conditions, and real style. In short, the network coverage was so "responsible" that it carried almost no weight in the general campaign. What remains, then, is to document all the things the networks didn't do in this election that might have made them a real factor. We should also consider whether the networks *ever* behave in a way that could determine electoral preferences or outcomes.

Don'ts and Didn'ts

Qualitatively and quantitatively, the Republicans had a measurably tougher time on evening news in the general election, especially when one looks at candidate spin and campaign issues coverage. But when one looks beyond these topics, there is a long list of things the networks did not do in 1984.

We need to consider the long list.

(1) **No Bias by Time:** One theory in media research holds that time on camera is influence. The theory states unequivocally that media exposure inherently and inevitably produces support for the person exposed. My guess is that Joseph Mengele and Constantin Chernenko would deny that premise. (Neither was available for comment.) Still, one could argue that had the networks given disproportionate time to Mondale/Ferraro—to make their case or just to smile warmly—that might have moved voters in a Democratic direction. Walter Mondale now suggests that had the networks given him more screen time, he would have done worse politically.[3] But whatever the real impact of exposure, the networks did *not* in 1984 show bias by time.

The Republicans received approximately 25,000 seconds (21,178 for Reagan and 3,780 for Bush) of newstime in their *campaign* coverage; the Democrats received about 26,000 seconds (19,970 for Mondale and 6,390 for Ferraro). That works out to approximately six seconds more per program for the Democrats—less, actually, than our rounding procedure may have given either side by accident. When one adds time spent covering Reagan as president, there is no advantage for the Democrats, but, in fact, a Democratic time deficit.

Time is the crassest of content measures, but we also found that the networks practiced "fairness by quotation" throughout the campaign. In 1984 the networks quoted neither side or both sides in the majority of cases. In those few cases where one side was quoted exclusively, it tended to be the Republicans.

The networks gave practically no time to the minor parties, other than pieces about Bob Richards and his radical-right version of the new Populist Party of America. But in covering the major parties, the networks played it fairly and equally. The granting of equal time to both sides helps explain how it is that news spin doesn't necessarily matter much. In this case, Reagan and Bush had time to work around and through much of the innuendo.

(2) **No Issue Bias:** It's been more than thirty years since Joseph McCarthy labeled Edward R. Murrow and CBS News part of the "jackal pack" of Communist sympathizers. The rhetoric has cooled since then, but the struggle continues. Jesse Helms and his friends are mad, and they're trying to get even. Their plan is to buy up CBS News stock and put a stop to that network's "liberal bias." When he laments network liberal bias, Helms seems specifically to have in mind the 1984 campaign.

Interestingly enough, the public doesn't see much partisan bias on network evening news.[4] Basically, the public is right, at least as far as our data about the issues are concerned. Even though spin and the campaign-issues agenda went against the Republicans in 1984, ideological bias about substantive matters hardly existed on evening news—not even on CBS.[5]

All told, our 1984 study included 826 news pieces.[6] Searching for issue bias, we went on a word-by-word search for any subjective statement by the reporter (or any "bias by quotation") that implied either a liberal or a conservative conclusion about the policy involved. But we found practically no issue bias on network evening news.

Only 2.5 percent of all the pieces implied a liberal position *or* a conservative position on any issue discussed in the piece. Part of that is because over half the news contains "no issue content" (fewer than two sentences). But that sorry truth ought not to obscure the more important, happier truth: only twenty-one pieces suggested a point of view on a policy issue. Eleven of those pieces implied a liberal point of view; ten seemed to us to be conservative. That represents a plus-one advantage for the liberals in a sample of 826 news reports, but this hardly constitutes a liberal victory. And it is hardly enough to move an electorate—even a liberal electorate. More important, the majority of those twenty-one pieces that showed bias were *commentaries*, the appropriate place for policy opinion. In the end, none of the networks displayed much ideology, and CBS News was as innocent as the rest.

Even when the networks appeared to be concentrating on campaign issues that might make the Republicans look bad, they kept subjectivity to a minimum. In covering campaign issues, there was bias by topic, but that rarely extended into the copy through subjective statements or innuendo. Excluding debate reports, we identified 140 full-fledged campaign issue pieces. The majority of them made the Republicans look bad, at least by topic (Reagan's age, Bush's rudeness). Yet in most cases, the networks neither blamed nor exonerated the candidate for any allegations presented in these campaign issue pieces.

There was some asymmetry in all this. When the networks conveyed a conclusion about the campaign issue at hand, the Republicans suffered from negative conclusions more than nine times out of ten. But in six cases out of seven, all the networks seemed content just to *raise* the issue, not to settle it by conveying guilt or innocence.

(3) **No Imperial Journalism:** In 1984, the networks lacked bite because they also failed to do those imperial and arrogant things they are presumed to do in every election. Consider first their use of verbs and adjectives.

Most political leaders remember every time the media used an insinuational verb against them: "he conceded," for example, instead of "he said." But in 1984, the networks used insinuational verbs rather sparingly. We made a list of insinuational verbs—verbs that implied something sinister about the speaker—and then poured through each piece looking for them. Our list was fairly restrictive (we did *not* consider a verb such as "insists," for example, to be so much insinuational as implicative) but our findings were still surprising: 91 percent of the campaign news items contained no insinuational verbs. The networks treated the Democrats and Republicans alike. Reagan and Bush were the objects of insinuational verbs in just under 10 percent of their campaign coverage; Mondale and Ferraro were about the same. But the more important finding here is that only 9 percent of the stories contained any loaded verbs at all.

The same holds true for adjectives. Using William Adams' research as a guide,[7] we had expected that the networks would be more likely to use pejorative adjectives to describe conservatives than to describe liberals. We were correct. We found eight times as many references to the "far right" as to the "far left." Network officials claim (note the verb) that that merely reflects the reality of 1984—there is no left wing in active presidential politics any more, while there is an active right wing. Perhaps. But the more interesting thing is that that ratio—eight to one—masks a more remarkable statistic. Only 18 stories out of more than 800 made any reference to *either* wing. In essence, adjective bias existed only at the margins. In the end, the networks were even more reluctant to practice subjectivity by adjective than by verb.

Then, too, we found the networks behaving almost passively when it came to establishing an issues agenda. Such was not the case with *campaign* issues. But when it came to substance issues, the networks followed the candidates' agenda, not their own. The most frequently

Table 1

WEEK-BY-WEEK "SPIN" AND "VIABILITY" SCORES FOR REAGAN
CADDELL THERMOMETER READINGS FOR REAGAN

	September				October				November
	1st week	2nd week	3rd week	4th week	1st week	2nd week	3rd week	4th week	1st week
Caddell thermometer			63	64	62 64	62	64	66	65
Reagan "spin"	−47	−16	−46	−22	−34	−57 −34	−26	+2	0
Reagan "viability"	25	34	21	17	24	−5 +9	23	60	38

Note: The author wishes to thank Patrick Caddell and Cambridge Survey Associates for making these data available.

addressed issues on TV were the most frequently addressed issues in reality: taxes, religion, U.S.-Soviet relations, deficits, and so on.

The networks gave tax issues the biggest play—two and a half times as much as deficits. If the networks had wanted to move votes toward Mondale in this election, that agenda would have been tailor-made for failure. But the networks followed the candidates' lead on issues in this campaign. And with the heavy news emphasis on tax issues, one can understand why Reagan did well on network news, even if the campaign-issues agenda was moving against him. All told, the issues agenda on evening news was a wash, reflecting what both candidates really were talking about.

We also checked the networks for subliminal bias via nonverbal communication. For us that meant meaningful voice inflection, eye gesture, body language, or video used to make an unstated point. To be fair to the networks and ourselves, we ignored nonverbal communication that simply reinforced the printed text. When ABC's Jim Wooten used a close-up of Reagan's very old-looking hands, for example, to make the point that Reagan is old, we did not classify the video as subliminal bias, since Wooten's whole piece was about Reagan's aging and the "age issue." The important point is that in over 90 percent of the news pieces, there was no meaningful nonverbal communication. Excluding pieces that contained a sarcastic voice inflexion (the least sinister of the nonverbal signals), the percentage of straight pieces—those without nonverbal cues—jumps to 98. The networks failed to cost Reagan any votes by what they said, and it is also fairly certain they cost him no votes by the way they said it. They simply did not practice nonverbal communication.

All of this implies an important reality about network news in 1984. They did use spin. They did build a campaign-issues agenda that looked suspicious. But they did not go off half-cocked or half-baked.

The best evidence probably involves evening news coverage of Reagan's age, a classic illustration of what networks will and won't do. Reagan's age eventually ranked as the number two campaign issue on evening news—the subject of fifteen separate pieces. (Only Reagan's remarks following the embassy bombing in Lebanon got more play.) But none of the networks touched the age issue until Reagan justified the coverage with his performance in the first debate. In fact, the networks held off even then, until the *Wall Street Journal* decided to make it a front-page story. The day the *Journal* made age a legitimate issue was the day the networks, especially ABC,[8] seized it for the first time.

So we come to an important conclusion: in 1984, despite some tougher press for the Republicans, the networks practiced fair and responsible journalism. They gave the GOP an equal chance to make its case; they gave the public a clear indication that the GOP was winning; and they gave Reagan opportunities to flash his smile and use his one-liners. Compared with news spin and campaign-news agenda, these things would almost certainly permit the Republican ticket to carry the day and the Electoral College. And so it was. All that remains now are two bigger questions: First, was this coverage in 1984 exceptional or was it the rule? Second, was the voters' response (or lack of response) unique to Reagan and his Teflon coating or is this the way the electorate generally behaves?

Is 1984 Unique?

Rolling Stone's William Greider seems to believe that the networks were unusually craven in this campaign.[9] He singled out Roone Arledge as the accomplice in emasculating network campaign journalism, claiming that Arledge had sold out to the new patriotism in order to make Olympic coverage a better show, benefiting Reagan in the process.

Greider is, in my mind, wrong if he believes that 1984 campaign reporting was in any way exceptional. In 1980, Margaret Sheehan and I found the same patterns—near-total objectivity on the issues; news spin decidedly less positive about the incumbent (Carter) or the early frontrunners (Kennedy and Reagan); a campaign issues agenda that reflected the networks' definitions of journalism; a substance issue agenda that reflected what the candidates really wished to address.[10] The 1984 coverage duplicates 1980's almost exactly.

There was one major difference between the last two campaigns: there was no hostage crisis in 1984, even though there were American hostages being held in the Middle East during *both* campaigns. But in a bizarre way, the hostage crisis of 1980 and the hostage noncrisis of 1984 reinforce the basic premise—that networks usually act responsibly, if not passively, in most of the substantive aspects of campaign reporting.

Roone Arledge, Greider's villain in 1984, actually played a big part in the "America Held Hostage" syndrome in 1980, helping Reagan then, too. But Jimmy Carter played a much bigger role in making the hostage crisis a media crisis. Carter chose to publicize, dramatize, personalize, and sensationalize the hostage story, and eventually, like a sorcerer's apprentice, found himself unable to staunch the flow of hostage news he had helped bring forth. The networks followed Carter's leadership on the hostage story. Not surprisingly, Reagan's people chose precisely the opposite tack with the 1984 hostage problem, and the networks accepted it. With no "news," they dutifully ignored the American hostages held captive in Lebanon throughout the 1984 campaign.

In essence, then, network news behaves in the same way from year to year. *Leaders* behave differently, and that changes news practice. Networks follow the leaders in any campaign—acerbically, to be sure, but in such a way that any impact on opinion choice is the exception, not a binding rule.

Where the networks get uppity is on the campaign issues—those watchdog-style issues. And that too has been the rule. If the networks *have* teeth, it's on these campaign issues. But, of course, it's on these campaign issues that the networks usually dull their teeth and waste their time. Nobody ever cared about Watergate, at least not in 1972. Nor did Billygate matter to the public in 1980. It was the same with Meesegate—press concern was unmatched almost completely by public concern.[11] Networks, like all national news sources, exhaust themselves on the sorts of campaign issues that the electorate finds ho-hum, assuming it finds them at all.

Is Reagan Unique?

There is a word for those who consider only content when discussing media impact: stupid. I have forced the discussion toward content because, after all, content is what we studied in 1984. Obviously, voters count too. Yet conventional wisdom about the electorate may, in light of this campaign, prove as misconceived as the conventional wisdom about the news itself.

The first misconception—and the broadest—is that the American news audience has, in the age of television, turned against incumbents. House incumbents do marvelously in reelection bids; Senate incumbency has, since 1980, made a remarkable comeback. And the fact is, presidential incumbents have not done at all badly in gaining audience support for their reelection in this, the television age.

Since Hoover, only *one* duly elected presidential incumbent has been defeated for reelection: Jimmy Carter. Kennedy probably would have been reelected. Johnson might well have been. Richard Nixon was reelected, carrying 49 states. Incumbents who attempt it are far more likely to win reelection in the broadcast era (from 1932) than those in the pre-broadcast era. Given almost any reason to do so, the electorate generally prefers to reelect the devil it knows.

My own guess is that incumbents have always had a tougher press than challengers. So, in 1984 we did not have an historic election in terms of media content or in terms of electoral response. As usual, an incumbent got the short end of the media spin and the long end of the popular vote. Despite the news spin or agenda, incumbents can do all right, so long as they have something else going for them.

This leads us to Reagan, an incumbent who had lots going for him. Reagan was able to work through or around his press—virtually any incumbent can, as long as *conditions* are favorable. The fact is, no president needs good press. He needs only good news. We've already seen that Reagan lost support when his press turned awful, most vividly after the first debate. But news spin and news agenda have almost no major impact on an incumbent when the news itself is good. In a race that starts with a twenty-point gap, spin and campaign issues agendas won't come close to making it a contest. Even though the networks never hyped the recovery, they covered it. Even though the networks continued to spin negatively about Grenada during the 1984 election campaign (CBS's David Martin presented an anniversary piece about the "sanitized war" in Grenada which made our military conduct there look much less than heroic), the networks covered the students, the flags, and the polls.

As long as the media do not conspire to keep major events and conditions away from the audience—and they do not—their news agenda and news spin will have almost no impact when compared with real news. Win a little war; have the nation's long distance runners do well at the summer Olympics; sit there as employment returns to the level at which you took office; the electorate will beat a path to your door a second time. Think not? Ask Margaret Thatcher, the United Kingdom's "Teflon candidate," a woman who is to free media performance in the TV age what John Riggins is to dinner etiquette. Would anyone argue that two-term, "landslide" Richard Nixon was the Great Communicator or Teflon coated? The electorate will almost never pay serious attention to spin or campaign issues agenda if things are good. Newspeople recognize this: why shouldn't we?

Weak Data or Weak Media?

From the very beginning of this research, our critics have blasted us for our methodology—for not taking into account Reagan's "free media performance," how he handled *himself* during the news. And those who insist Reagan is *sui generis* score points when they argue that Reagan made his own good press by saying clever things, by smiling warmly, by orchestrating a superb campaign. Their argument is simple: without having factored in Reagan's free media performance, our research and unorthodox conclusions are based on weak data.

Fair enough. If Reagan could dispel the age issue with a one-liner in the last debate (the press said so), free media performance is important. If Reagan can crack a smile and a joke while Chris Wallace implies that Reagan is all show, who cares what Wallace says? I accept all that—especially the part about free media performance as an antidote to bad press. But my own assessment is that our methods and data are not weak—it is, instead, the *media* that are weak. Despite our initial finding that spin and agenda went against Reagan and Bush, this second set of findings shows something different: The networks practiced no ideological bias; granted candidates equal "time"; covered Reagan's lead and almost all his laugh-lines; and made subjective assessments about only trivial sorts of things like "motives." Our methodology shows what I now consider the larger truth—that spin and campaign news agenda are almost all the networks are willing to risk in a presidential campaign, and they are hardly freewheeling enough with those to move an electorate.

Given what we found in the overall coverage—what was *said*—network news power in a general election boils down to innuendo and to campaign issues.

Compared with real events, real conditions, and free media performance, those powers will usually prove to be minimal, at least once the nominations are secure.

The networks, outside of presenting hard news and fact, have far less influence on voters than most critics—and most campaign managers—assume. In 1984, the networks wound up weaker than our data. The fact is, the networks ought to embrace our findings—showing as they do that the networks used only a little innuendo: They did it justifiably, did it responsibly, and did it without much effect.

The Responsible Electorate

Nineteen eighty-four has produced a host of news media mistakes—not so much by the news media as *about* the news media. Fortunately for me, the mistakes run from left to right. The left is wrong in believing that the networks let Reagan go scot free. William Greider must have been watching a different election from the one we saw on network news.

The Democratic establishment has it wrong too. Reagan is *not* impervious to bad news. He even showed some vulnerability to bad press—more than his opponents, in fact, even if not all that much in the end.

Walter Mondale is off the mark as well. This was not an election decided on the basis of free media performance. Reagan was as effective on television in 1983 as in 1984, when two-thirds of the public disapproved his presidency and John Glenn was leading him in the trial heats by more than ten points. If John Glenn can lead you in the polls, you are not, by any stretch, a political Houdini. Ronald Reagan took the oath this January less popular than Truman was in January 1949, than Eisenhower was in January 1957, than Johnson was in January 1965. Why would anybody need to explain the magic on the basis of free media performance when the magic is almost commonplace? Take away Grenada, Mary Lou Retton, the end (almost) of inflation, the return of investment and jobs, and free media performance is a weak reed.

The network news people have their own blinders about 1984. They insist that our spin measure is ill-conceived (a real possibility) and that they covered only Reality. In a news world where Reagan's dirty tricks and ties to hecklers in California (all unproven to be sure) get nine times as much attention as Mondale's real health, this is not reality with a capital R.

But the bigger mistakes about network news belong to the conservatives, to the Republicans, and also to the network baiters, especially those sympathetic to Jesse Helms and his war against CBS. There is virtually no ideological bias on evening news. There is no partisan bias on evening news. There is bias against incumbents and frontrunners. But that is journalism, not partisanship.

And as for the conservative fear that news spin determines public opinion, or that news agenda determines public concern, that is almost as far from the truth as Helms' indictment of Dan Rather. Unless they bug the opposition party headquarters, leaders set policy agendas, not the press. In 1984, the only time spin really seemed to matter was when the networks decided to spin more critically against Gary Hart, the media phenomenon of the year. And that critical spin was, at the time, critical to Hart. But why should conservatives complain about that? Come to think of it, the Republicans have carried 93 states out of the last 100 in the Electoral College vote—more than 80 percent of the states since 1972. What's the beef?

We found the networks add a line or two of bad press to a day's campaign piece. And they will work double over-time to find evidence that tars the frontrunner or incumbent with things as petty as obscene language or as potentially damaging as Watergate. But that's about all they do.

The 1980 election was a great election for those of us who believe liberal bias in the media is a near-myth. The networks covered left-leaning Kennedy more negatively than center-seeking Jimmy Carter. They covered Carter, the moderate, more negatively than right-of-center Reagan. And 1984 is a great election too, for those of us who believe that, in general elections especially, the network news programs and personnel are more a factor than a force: what they "do" is almost never enough to transform an election, unless "do" includes their coverage of facts, conditions, and real events.

Even for those who lost this election, there is some good news: In 1984, four reasonably responsible candidates spoke through three reasonably responsible networks to one reasonably responsible electorate. What need is there for conservatives to blame the networks, the Democrats to blame television, or the rest of us to blame the system? It was a pretty good show on network news in 1984, and it was even a little bit more than that. ☑

---

[1] For a more complete discussion of these scores and their impact see Michael J. Robinson, "Where is the Beef? Media and Media Elites in '84," in Austin Ranney, *The American Elections of 1984*, American Enterprise Institute, Washington, D.C., forthcoming 1985.

[2] Ibid. For Bush and for Ferraro, Caddell's measures are more or less biweekly.

[3] On three public occasions since the election, Mondale has made reference to his free media performance, what that performance cost him personally, and what that performance portends for American democracy.

[4] The ABC Viewpoint surveys, begun in 1981 and conducted with the express purpose of gauging public attitudes toward TV news, find that the overwhelming majority of the American people see no partisan bias on evening news. When asked if "television news reports tend to favor the Democratic party or Republican party," 67% said neither party, 17% the Democrats, and 11% the Republicans. On the other hand, 35% saw "television news reporters as pro-Communist in their views." See Viewpoint Poll, #8, June 15-19, 1984, ABC Survey #0121.

[5] CBS, in fact, often turns up being the "conservative" network. See Michael J. Robinson, "Jesse Helms, Take Stock," *Washington Journalism Review*, April 1985.

[6] The 826 stories were of the following types: presidential and vice-presidential campaign reports, 698 pieces; "lower level" campaign reports, 31 pieces; "official" reports about the president or vice-president (not linked to the campaign), 78 pieces; "other," 19 pieces.

[7] William C. Adams, "The Media in Campaign '84: Convention Coverage," *Public Opinion*, December/January 1985.

[8] ABC presented three pieces in a row on October 9, all dealing with the age issue.

[9] William Greider, "Terms of Endearment: How the News Media Came to be All the President's Men." *Rolling Stone*, December 20, 1984.

[10] Michael J. Robinson and Margaret A. Sheehan, *Over the Wire and on TV: CBS and UPI in Campaign '80*, Russell Sage, New York, 1983, passim.

[11] Our surveys in April 1984 show that almost two thirds of the American public did not know why Ed Meese had been in the news at the time; half could not identify him. Michael J. Robinson and Maura Clancey, "Teflon Politics," *Public Opinion*, April/May 1984.

by James A. Barnes and John C. Weicher

Urban Blight: The Democrats' Eroding Metropolitan Base

It's a well-known maxim of presidential politics that the ticket must first secure its base before it goes after additional voters. So when the northern, urban Mondale-Ferraro ticket campaigned in Tupelo before Chicago, and when the candidates spent more time in Tennessee than in Baltimore and Milwaukee, they were flouting tradition—and some might say good sense. In 1984 the Republican tide swept over Democratic redoubts in America's major metropolitan areas, running stronger in several "rustbelt" megalopoli than it did nationally. Looking at the rubble left behind by Ronald Reagan's 49-state landslide, Democrats must be asking themselves: "Where's the base?"

For the past fifty years, America's major metropolitan areas have been that base—the embodiment of the Democratic party's New Deal coalition. Franklin Roosevelt owed much of his success to urban voters. Assessing the 1940 election returns, Samuel Lubell wrote in the *Saturday Evening Post*: "Mr. Roosevelt is the first president to owe his election in such great measure to the teeming cities. On farms and in towns Mr. Willkie more than held his own. It was in the industrial centers that the Republican hopes were blacked out in factory smoke."

Things have changed since 1940. True, the inner cities—Chicago, Detroit, and New York—went Democratic in 1984; they always do. If they ever stop, the Democrats will go the way of the Whigs and the Federalists. But if we include the suburbs with the central cities and look at the voting patterns of *metropolitan areas*—the basic economic and social "cities," if not the political ones—the Democrats are in critical condition at the presidential level.

The *Statistical Abstract* defines a metropolitan area as "one of a large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities which have a high degree of economic and social integration with that nucleus." A layman might also describe that community by the expressways and rail lines people commute on, the newspapers they read, the television stations they watch, and the sports teams they cheer.

For the Census Bureau's "top 25" metropolitan areas[1] we aggregated 1984 vote totals county-by-county (a metropolitan area is defined by one or more whole counties). The Elections Research Center provided data for the 1980 presidential election, and we calculated the 1976 totals using statistics published in the *1977 City and County Data Book* and *America Votes 12*.

Of the "top 25" metropolitan areas in the country, twenty went to Ronald Reagan in 1984 (see table 1). The five that remained in the Democratic column were the Twin Cities, Mondale's home; Pittsburgh, with the highest unemployment rate among the top 25; Cleveland, another old industrial area with high unemployment (carried by only 10,000 votes); San Francisco, the Democratic clan's gathering place last summer; and Washington, D.C., home of the federal bureaucracy.

All others went Republican: New

York, the home of the Democrats' vice-presidential candidate; Detroit, with all its United Auto Workers; Chicago, despite its steel mills, railroads, and Democratic machine; St. Louis, long a symbol of urban decay; blue-collar Milwaukee and Baltimore; stolid Philadelphia. To say nothing of the Sunbelt metropolises.

It wasn't always—or even recently—this way. In 1976, southerner Jimmy Carter captured every one of the "top 25" in the Northeast and Midwest except for Cincinnati. From the Sunbelt he snagged Miami-Ft. Lauderdale, Tampa-St. Petersburg, Atlanta, and San Francisco. Four years later, Carter carried nine of the "top 25," mostly the heavy industrial centers of the Midwest, and would have carried more but for John Anderson's candidacy. But by 1984, Democratic strength receded here also.

The national electorate swung 4.3 percent in Reagan's direction from 1980 to 1984. Nine metropolitan areas saw even greater shifts in their voters' choices, and six of those were in the "rustbelt": Baltimore, 7.5 percent; Detroit, 6.8 percent; Cincinnati, 6.4 percent; Kansas City, 6.0 percent; St. Louis, 5.7 percent; and Chicago, 4.4 percent. In other words, these six metropolitan areas were changing their voting habits at a rate greater than the rest of the nation, albeit from a higher Democratic base (except Cincinnati). In the Sunbelt, Atlanta, Dallas, and Tampa-St. Petersburg swung Republican at 15.3, 8.8, and 8.2 percent rates, respectively. And in all of these areas except Chicago, the Democratic presidential candidate's percentage has fallen steadily from 1976, to 1980, to 1984.

The decline in the Democratic vote percentage in these eight metropolitan areas between 1980 and 1984 suggests one of two things: either all the people who voted for independent candidate John Anderson in 1980, plus some Carter supporters, voted for Reagan in 1984, or, for every Anderson voter that Mondale picked up, he lost more than one 1980 Carter voter—most of them probably conservatives and moderates.

In several other metropolitan areas like New York, Chicago, and Minneapolis-St. Paul, the increase in the Democratic presidential vote percentage was much less than half the percentage of votes cast for Anderson and other minor party candidates in 1980. Once again, either a substantial majority of voters who backed Anderson in 1980 switched to Reagan in 1984, or Mondale's gains from Anderson voters were more than offset by losses among 1980 Carter voters.

When John Anderson endorsed Mondale, a senior Mondale campaign official told the *Washington Post* that Anderson "can be very helpful with one of our principal target groups—the independent, younger, suburban voters." If Anderson's endorsement did encourage his supporters to vote for Mondale in 1984 (a big "if"), the returns indicate that even in metropolitan America a coalition of urban dwellers and suburban yuppies cannot replicate the New Deal coalition's successes.

It is easy to see why the "top 25" metropolitan areas should play a vital role in any Democratic strategy for capturing the White House. In the last election, votes cast in seventeen of those areas (see table 2) contributed half or more of the total votes cast in each of fourteen states and the District of Columbia. Those states (plus D.C.) have a combined electoral vote total of 243, just 27 shy of the 270 needed to win a presidential election. Add the 29 electoral votes of Texas, where voters in the Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston metropolitan areas cast 44 percent of the state's presidential ballots last year, and a Democrat could retake the White House. But as Walter Mondale discovered, no Democrat can carry Texas with only one-third of the vote in Houston and Dallas.

The Democratic vote in many of the metropolitan areas fell to frightening lows in 1984. In thirteen of the "top 25," less than 45 percent of the voters cast ballots for Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro. In nine, fewer than 40 percent voted Democratic. Areas with long Democratic traditions, like St. Louis—one of the few major metropolitan areas to stick with Adlai Stevenson in both 1952 and 1956—gave Mondale-Ferraro only 42.7 percent of the vote. And even if the old Pendergast Democratic machine had still been in business, delivering its notorious 60,000 "ghost" voters to the polls, Walter Mondale could not have carried metropolitan Kansas City!

Some analysts suggest that the outlook for future Democratic presidential candidates is bleak because, while they may still be carrying the declining population centers of the Northeast and Midwest, the Republicans are capturing the rapidly developing Sunbelt metropolitan areas. Kevin Phillips reported that: "Twenty of the twenty-five large U.S. cities that lost population between 1970 and 1980 went for Mondale. Growth centers backed Reagan."[2]

Table 1

PRESIDENTIAL VOTE IN AMERICA'S "TOP 25" METROPOLITAN AREAS

	1976		1980		1984	
Metro Area	**Rep.**	**Dem.**	**Rep.**	**Dem.**	**Rep.**	**Dem.**
Atlanta	37.3%	61.9%	43.9%	51.4%	61.9%	38.1%
Baltimore	46.1	53.4	40.7	51.1	52.4	47.6
Boston*	40.6	55.6	41.9	41.5	50.7	49.3
Chicago	48.4	49.4	45.1	45.8	54.1	45.9
Cincinnati	57.8	40.4	58.4	35.8	67.7	32.3
Cleveland	41.7	55.4	44.1	47.3	49.6	50.4
Dallas-Fort Worth	53.1	45.9	58.3	38.0	68.4	31.6
Denver	52.2	44.9	52.2	32.1	61.7	38.3
Detroit	46.7	55.1	44.7	47.8	54.9	45.1
Houston	51.0	48.2	58.4	37.7	62.3	37.7
Kansas City, MO	47.9	50.0	47.8	45.2	57.3	42.7
Los Angeles	50.7	46.8	55.2	35.3	61.3	38.7
Miami-Fort Lauderdale	43.1	55.5	53.0	38.2	58.0	42.0
Milwaukee	47.7	50.0	45.6	45.8	50.9	49.1
Minneapolis-St. Paul	41.6	55.3	38.7	48.7	47.8	52.2
New York	45.1	53.9	47.4	43.7	54.8	45.2
Philadelphia	44.6	53.5	47.2	43.6	52.9	47.1
Phoenix	61.7	34.5	65.0	24.6	72.7	27.3
Pittsburgh	47.2	51.3	43.1	49.3	42.7	57.3
St. Louis	47.2	51.3	49.5	45.3	57.3	42.7
San Diego	55.7	41.6	60.8	27.3	66.0	34.0
San Francisco-Oakland	44.7	50.0	43.7	41.3	48.3	51.7
Seattle	49.6	46.4	46.0	39.0	55.2	44.8
Tampa-St. Petersburg	42.2	50.6	53.5	40.8	64.5	35.5
Washington, D.C.	42.2	55.9	43.6	45.0	48.0	52.0

*Boston's CMSA is usually defined in terms of cities and towns rather than counties. Because election data are not readily available from New England's cities and towns, we used returns from Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, and Suffolk counties.

Our own survey of the "top 25" metropolitan areas found that of the five Mondale carried, three grew modestly in population from 1970 to 1980—Minneapolis-St. Paul, San Francisco-Oakland, and Washington, D.C. Reagan swept all the areas that grew more than 20 percent, but he also carried net population losers like the New York and St. Louis metropolitan areas. On a smaller scale, population growth doesn't seem to be a consistently good indicator of political trends. In the go-go state of California, Anaheim and Fresno have nearly identical populations, and both saw their population grow 32 percent from 1970 to 1980. But while Reagan carried Anaheim by a three-to-one margin last November, Mondale won in Fresno. Growth and decline in population may coincide with other changing political variables in metropolitan areas, but growth alone is an unreliable barometer of voting trends.

The "top 25" are not hostile to all Democrats. Voters in the "top 25" sent about twice as many Democrats as Republicans to the House of Representatives in 1984. They have elected five times as many Democrats as Republicans to be the mayors of the major cities that dominate the metropolitan areas. Even Phoenix, which is consistently the least Democratic of the "top 25" at the presidential level, has a Democrat as its mayor.

There has been a modest increase in the number of Republican House members from these areas since 1976, but that is primarily a result of reapportionment and the growth of congressional districts in the Sunbelt. But this accomplishment — about a 20-percent increase since 1976—does not compare with the Republicans' success in doubling the number of metropolitan areas they've carried in presidential contests during the same period.

Votes from the "top 25" metropolitan areas today account for more than one-third of all ballots cast in a presidential election. In past elections, Democratic presidential candidates could always count on a big metropolitan vote to offset Republican votes from "upstate" or "downstate." That metropolitan vote has been the foundation on which Democrats have based their success. John F. Kennedy carried Illinois by only 8,858 votes in 1960, largely on the strength of metropolitan Chicago, which he won by nearly 200,000 votes. Future Democratic hopefuls must wonder whether Chicago will ever do it for them again.

Table 2
"TOP 25" METROPOLITAN VOTING IN STATES

State	Electoral votes	Percent of votes cast for Mondale/Reagan as a share of all votes cast in state	Composition of metropolitan areas
AZ	7	54%	Phoenix MSA
CA	47	75	Los Angeles-Anaheim-Riverside CMSA, San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose CMSA, San Diego MSA
CO	8	57	Denver-Boulder CMSA
CT	[illegible]	24	Bridgeport-Milford PMSA, Danbury PMSA
DE	3	70	New Castle County
FL	21	42	Miami-Fort Lauderdale CMSA, Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA
GA	12	44	Atlanta MSA
IL	24	66	Chicago PMSA, Aurora-Elgin PMSA, Joliet PMSA, Lake County, E. St. Louis-Alton PMSA
IN	12	12	Gary-Hammond PMSA, Dearborn County
KS	7	24	Kansas City PMSA
KY	9	7	Boone, Campbell, Kenton Counties (suburban Cincinnati)
MD	10	89	Baltimore MSA, Calvert, Cecil, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince Georges Counties
MA	13	65	Boston-Lawrence-Salem CMSA
MI	20	50	Detroit-Ann Arbor CMSA
MO	11	56	Kansas City PMSA, St. Louis PMSA
MN	10	56	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN MSA
NJ	16	79	Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hudson, Salem Counties, Newark, Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon, Monmouth-Ocean, Trenton PMSAs
NY	36	53	Orange County, New York PMSA, Nassau-Suffolk PMSA
OH	23	40	Cincinnati, OH PMSA, Cleveland-Akron-Lorain CMSA
PA	25	59	Philadelphia, PA PMSA, Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley CMSA
TX	29	44	Dallas-Fort Worth CMSA, Houston-Galveston-Brazoria CMSA
VA	12	25	Washington-VA MSA
WA	10	52	Seattle-Tacoma CMSA
WI	11	37	Kenosha, St. Croix Counties, Milwaukee-Racine CMSA
DC	3	100	District of Columbia

Note: MSA = Metropolitan statistical area; CMSA = Consolidated metropolitan statistical area; PMSA = Primary metropolitan statistical area

The authors appreciate the assistance of David Hover, Alice McGillvary, and Richard Scammon in preparing this article.

---

[1] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1984* (104th edition), Washington, D.C., 1983, p. 894.

[2] *The American Political Report*, February 8, 1985, volume 14, number 11, p. 4.

by John F. Bibby

State Elections: What 1984 Means for 1986

National elections may get most of the attention, but prudent party leaders have learned to watch state contests at least as closely. Speaking to a post-election meeting of the Republican Governors Association, the group's chairman, Richard L. Thornburgh of Pennsylvania, pointed out "the distortion between the sweep in the presidential election and [small] number of us here." Despite Reagan's 1984 landslide, Republican governors were enjoying neither "majority status [n]or legislative control."[1] And commenting upon prescriptions for recasting the losing Democratic party in a more moderate image, Congressman Michael Barnes (D-Md.) stressed the importance of state leadership. "There is already a new Democratic party in existence," he said, "that is quite different from the perception the American people seem to have of the national Democratic party." The new party is, according to Barnes, "alive and well at the state and local level, where it is governing with sound fiscal policies while retaining traditional values of caring. . . ."[2]

These thoughtful leaders see their parties' futures linked to success in state elections. Those elections hold significant implications for public policy, especially when the Reagan administration is intent upon transferring additional authority to the states.

Gubernatorial Elections

Governor Thornburgh had cause for concern. With thirteen governorships at stake in 1984—seven held by the Republicans and six by the Democrats—the GOP registered a net gain of only one seat (see table 1). The Republicans captured four governorships—North Carolina, Rhode Island, Utah, and West Virginia—while Democrats took the executive mansions away in three—North Dakota, Vermont, and Washington. The Republicans' net gain of one governorship is close to the average national gain (+1.33) for the president's party

Table 1

EXTENT OF CHANGE IN PARTISAN CONTROL OF GOVERNORSHIPS, 1984

	Republicans	Democrats
Pre-1984 election line-up	15	35
Governorship up for election in 1984	7	6
Post-1984 election line-up	16	34
Governorship gained	4	3
Governorship lost	3	4
Net gain/loss	+1	−1
Incumbents reelected	2	2
Incumbents defeated	2	0
Open seats won	6	1

in presidential elections from 1952 to 1984 (see table 2).

Between 1960 and 1980, 42 percent of the states holding simultaneous presidential and gubernatorial elections split the results: one party carried the state for president and the other party won the governorship. In 1984, voters again demonstrated this dramatic capacity for ticket-splitting, when 39 percent of the states with gubernatorial contests split their results. The most striking example occurred in Montana, where incumbent Democratic Governor Ted Schwinden won reelection with 70 percent of the vote, while President Reagan carried the state with 60 percent.

The Republican governors' modest gain in 1984 was not unusual. The voters' tendency to differentiate between national and state elections in presidential years, coupled with the trend toward electing governors for four-year terms in nonpresidential years, has made major shifts in party control of governorships less likely—even in years of presidential landslides. Indeed, in the presidential landslides of 1956, 1964, and 1972, the party winning the presidency actually suffered a net loss of governorships. Reagan's 1980 win was the only recent presidential victory that also produced significant partisan shifts among the governors; the GOP gained five state executives.

Incumbency gave no special advantage to governors in 1984. Four of the six incumbent governors (two Democrats and two Republicans) were reelected, while two Republican incumbents (Olson, North Dakota; and Spellman, Washington) were defeated. This proportion (one-third) was about average; since the mid-1950s, 29 percent of the incumbents on average have been defeated.

Risks for the President's Party

Even though the gubernatorial elections of 1984—a presidential year—were insulated from national trends, this is not the pattern that we should expect in 1986. Gubernatorial elections operate relatively independently from national electoral tendencies in presidential years, but they are particularly sensitive to national trends in midterm elections. In midterm gubernatorial elections between 1950 and 1982, the president's party suffered an average net loss of six governorships (see table 2). Republican governors of the president's party have proved to be especially vulnerable at midterm, suffering an average net loss of seven seats, compared to the Democratic average of five.

Reformists reasoned that moving gubernatorial elections to a four-year midterm cycle would insulate them from presidential politics, so that state elections would be uncontaminated by national issues. The way things have worked out, the voters have foiled the reformers' intentions. Instead, gubernatorial elections are *more* susceptible to the national political climate at midterm than are House or Senate contests. Because governors are the most visible figures within their states, constantly embroiled in major controversies and widely perceived to have a substantial effect on public policy, they tend to become lightning rods for public unhappiness during midterm elections. Without the president leading his party's ticket, the governor is at the top of the ballot—exposed as the most available target for voter discontent.

Table 2

PARTY GAINS/LOSSES OF GOVERNORSHIPS AND STATE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS IN PRESIDENTIAL AND MIDTERM ELECTIONS, 1950-1984

	Average Gain/Loss		
	By party winning presidency	**By Republicans when they win presidency**	**By Democrats when they win presidency**
Presidential Election Years			
Governorships	+1.33	+2.2	−.33
State legislative chambers	+2.33	+2.2	+2.67

	Average Gain/Loss		
	By president's party	**By Republicans when they hold presidency**	**By Democrats when they hold presidency**
Midterm Election Years			
Governorships	−6.2	−7.4	−4.8
State legislative chambers	−12.7	−13.4	−12.0

Republican strategists looking ahead to 1986 should be especially concerned that since 1950 the president's party has sustained significant net losses of governorships in midterm elections (except in 1962, when there was no net change). To contain the electorate's typical midterm anti-administration tendencies may require a major infusion of party resources into gubernatorial elections. Governor Thornburgh has said that he will be making "the rounds in Washington to make it clear that we [Republican governors] plan to play a bigger role in 1986."[3] The way national GOP leaders respond to the governors' intensified activity may be critical to election outcomes. In 1982, substantial allocations of national party financial resources to marginal Senate and House races probably prevented much larger losses for the Republicans in the House and made it possible for them to maintain a 55-45 edge over the Democrats in the Senate.[4] Perhaps giving a similar priority to gubernatorial contests would have the same effect in 1986.

Whatever the national Republican leadership decides about the gubernatorial elections the pattern of presidential party losses could be tempered by other factors. In 1986 the Democrats will be defending three times as many governorships as the GOP—twenty-seven versus nine. Twelve Democrats had narrow victory margins in their last elections—less than 54 percent of the vote—while only three Republicans had such tight races. This is the reverse of the 1986 Senate situation, where it is the Republicans who are defending the bulk of the seats. The GOP has twenty-two Senate seats up, many of them highly marginal, while the Democrats are guarding twelve seats, most of which are comparatively safe.

Gubernatorial losses in the president's party could be further diminished because so many incumbent governors are lured by the United States Senate. There are fourteen states with Republican senators up for election in 1986 where there are incumbent Democratic governors, and twelve of them will be finishing their current terms in that year. David Broder has reported that at least eight and perhaps twelve of the Democratic governors are considered potential senatorial candidates in 1986.[5] To the extent that popular Democratic governors like Bruce Babbitt (Arizona), George Nigh (Oklahoma), and Robert Graham (Florida) seek senatorial office, they may decrease Democratic chances of scoring a substantial net gain in governorships, while increasing their party's chances of taking control of the Senate from the Republicans. By contrast, there appear to be few opportunities for Republican governors to capture Senate seats from the Democrats. California governor George Deukmejian is expected to seek reelection rather than challenge Senator Alan Cranston, while Illinois Governor James Thompson is unlikely to run against Senator Alan Dixon. Only former governors Kit Bond (Missouri) and Richard Snelling (Vermont), whose terms expired in 1984, are potential Republican challengers from the gubernatorial ranks for Senate seats currently held by Democrats.

Short of their gaining election to the United States Senate, however, the governors should not be expected to be a major collective force within either national party. Republican governors since 1964 have been singularly ineffective in influencing national politics, especially presidential nominations. It remains to be seen whether they have the capacity to influence Republican National Committee fund allocation in 1986. Likewise, Democratic governors have been minor players in Democratic presidential nominating politics in the post McGovern-Fraser Commission reform era. (Their recent floundering in selecting Charles Manatt's successor demonstrated the difficulty governors have in exerting collective influence in national politics.) Nor have the Republican or Democratic governors associations developed national campaign organizations that are as capable as their senatorial and congressional counterparts of recruiting candidates and providing financial and technical campaign assistance.

The current Democratic dominance in the nation's state houses does have its ironic dimension. The Republican party—the party of governmental decentralization—holds only one-third (sixteen) of the governorships, but has been able to dominate the presidency, winning four of the last five elections. At the same time, the Democratic party, which has tended to advocate a larger role for the national government, has consistently dominated the nation's governorships during the same period. The Democrats have, in fact, been *most* successful in the states where Ronald Reagan has run the strongest: seven of the eight mountain states, and ten of the eleven states of the Old Confederacy. These mountain and southern state executives must have projected an image different from that offered by the national Democratic party.

State Legislative Elections

Although the Republicans picked up over 300 state legislative seats in 1984, they have yet to regain the strength that they had following the 1980 elections (diminished by the 1982 elections). In 1984, the GOP took control of seven state legislative chambers that had been held by the Democrats, while they yielded three. In two states (Montana and New Mexico) the Republicans gained a tie in one legislative chamber. As a result of these elections, the Republicans had a net gain of five legislative chambers (see table 3). This modest shift in control toward the Republicans shows that state legislative elections tend to function quite separately from national trends in presidential years. Between 1952 and 1980, the winning presidential candidate's party has averaged a net gain of only two legislative chambers in presidential election years (see table 2). The five-chamber 1984 gain by the Republicans was, therefore, slightly above average.

Probably the most significant Republican gains occurred in the South, where, however, there were no shifts in partisan control of legislative chambers. For example, the Republicans picked up twenty-five seats in North Carolina and seventeen in Texas. In Florida, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia, the GOP now has one-third of the membership of these states' lower houses and is in a position to influence gubernatorial-legislative rela-

Table 3

EXTENT OF CHANGE IN PARTISAN CONTROL OF STATE LEGISLATURES, 1984*

	Republicans	Democrats
Pre-1984 Election Line-up		
Chambers controlled	27	71
States in which one party controlled both chambers (5 states had split party control of legislature)	11	33
Post-1984 Election Line-up		
Chambers controlled	32	66
States in which one party controlled both chambers (10 states have split party control of legislature)	11	28
Chambers gained	7	2
Chambers lost	2	7
Net number of chambers won/lost	+5	−5
Chambers in which party gained seats	57	17

*Nebraska has a nonpartisan legislature.

Source: "1984 Elections: Key Points and Analysis," *State Legislative Report*, Vol. 9, No. 7 (November 1984). Denver: National Conference of State Legislatures.

tions in veto situations. In five of the southern states, the Republicans now have over 30 percent of the lower house membership.[6] If these GOP gains continue, the traditional "nonpartisan" politics of some southern state legislatures is likely to change character. True two-party legislative politics in the South is, though, still a long way off, because the Republicans hold few seats in most of the region's state senates (one in Louisiana, three in Arkansas, and four in Alabama).

The shifts in party control of legislative chambers resulting from the 1984 election have increased the incidence of divided government at the state level. A majority (twenty-five) of the states with partisan legislatures will have governors of one party and at least one house of the legislature controlled by the opposition party in 1985. Prior to the 1984 elections, twenty-one states were characterized by divided control. This increased incidence of divided government will produce, in all likelihood, protracted delays and partisan maneuvering in enacting state budgets, thus reducing the likelihood of any major shifts in state policy.

1986

Although 1984 brought relatively few changes in the partisan control of state legislatures, more dramatic shifts can be expected in 1986. As is true of governorships, greater changes in party control of state legislative chambers occur in midterm elections than in presidential years. The president's party has sustained an average net loss of twelve chambers to the opposition in the midterm elections between 1950 and 1982 (see table 2). If this trend continues in 1986, and if national issues are working to the disadvantage of the president's party as they usually do, the GOP will lose a significant number of the chambers it now holds.

There is a factor increasingly at work in state legislative elections that may substantially retard partisan shifts of control in the future—the effect of incumbency and the advantages it offers for reelection. The incumbency advantage has already helped insulate elections to the United States House of Representatives from national swings of political sentiment. Over 90 percent of incumbent representatives regularly win reelection. State legislative elections have not yet reached the House's level of incumbency advantage, but there were signs in the 1984 elections that they may soon approach it.

As state legislatures have grown more professionalized—annual sessions, higher pay, lower turnover, larger staffs—the job of the legislator has become virtually full-time in many states. Incumbency gives legislators the advantage in self-advertisement and in financing a campaign. In addition, incumbents often enjoy the support of party caucus staffs and aggressive legislative campaign committees. As a result, it is becoming more difficult to unseat incumbents. The National Conference of State Legislatures has reported that in 1984, from 25 to 65 percent of the incumbent legislators in many states were unopposed in both the primary and general elections.[7] In Colorado, for example, all eleven of the Senate incumbents were reelected, and in the Pennsylvania House, only one out of 178 incumbents was defeated—a 99 and 44/100 percent reelection rate. Incumbent reelection rates of 93 percent in the Wisconsin Senate, 91 percent in the Wisconsin Assembly, and 88.5 percent in Colorado's House also dramatize the advantages of incumbency.

National Party Support

Most speculation about the 1986 midterm elections is centered on whether the Republicans can maintain their control of the United States Senate and hold their own in the House. Senatorial and congressional election outcomes, however, have their antecedents in state politics, since candidates most often emerge from the gubernatorial and state legislative ranks. Without a large stable of potential candidates for national office, a party's prospects for recruiting strong contenders is severely restricted. Furthermore, it is the state legislatures that redraw the congressional district lines after every census and thereby have a major influence on which party will control the House. Democratic dominance of state governments and the redistricting process after the 1980 Census have aided Democrats significantly in maintaining large House majorities, despite GOP gains of approximately 50 percent of the national popular vote for the House in 1984.

One of the major intraparty issues for 1986, therefore, is the priority that the national party organizations give to gubernatorial and state legislative elections. The Republican National Committee, under Bill Brock's leadership, pioneered an unprecedented level of national party involvement and support for gubernatorial and legislative candidates, and it paid handsome dividends in the 1978 and 1980 elections.[8] After the GOP gained the White House and Senate, however, the emphasis on state elections diminished in national party councils. The Democrats, with substantially fewer resources, have never been able to mount a major effort of national party support for state candidates. With much at stake in 1986 and with the 1990 Census approaching, a key question for the mid-1980s is which national party will give priority to building the support necessary for sustained electoral success at the state level. ☑

---

[1] Quoted by James R. Dickenson and Dan Balz, "Republican Governors Get Advice," *The Washington Post*, December 5, 1984, p. A6.

[2] Quoted by David S. Broder, "A New Party, Waiting," *The Washington Post*, November 28, 1984, p. A21.

[3] Dickenson and Balz, p. A6.

[4] Larry Sabato, "Parties, PACs and Independent Groups," in Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein (editors), *The American Elections of 1982* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1983), pp. 80-82.

[5] David S. Broder, "The Governors' Threat To the GOP," *The Washington Post*, August 1, 1984, p. A19.

[6] Florida–35 percent, North Carolina–30.8 percent, Tennessee–37.4 percent, Texas–35 percent, and Virginia–34.3 percent.

[7] "1984 Elections: Key Points and Analysis," *State Legislative Report* vol. 9, no. 7 (November 1984), Denver: National Conference of State Legislatures, p. 1.

[8] John F. Bibby, "Political Parties and Federalism: The Republican National Committee Involvement in Gubernatorial and Legislative Elections," *Publius*, vol. 9 (Winter 1979), pp. 229-236.

R2110-1

$5.00

Public Opinion

0004020 G
ACQUISITIONS EDITOR
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INDEX
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE
4520 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY
WASHINGTON DC 20014

Are poor people different from you and me?

We could ask the experts. In late August the Census Bureau will release its statistical portrait of poverty in America. Quite properly, it will receive widespread attention.

But there are other experts—perhaps the ultimate experts. They are the poor themselves, and they have seldom been consulted. A new survey by the *Los Angeles Times* has done just that; it asked the poor, as well as the nonpoor, about poverty. What the survey found is . . .

(Continued on page 2)

Public
opinion

Volume 8, Number 3 June/July 1985

Publisher
William J. Baroody, Jr.

Co-Editors
Seymour Martin Lipset
Ben J. Wattenberg
Senior Editor
Everett Carll Ladd
Managing Editor
Karlyn H. Keene
Deputy Managing Editor
Victoria A. Sackett
Assistant Editor
Graham Hueber
Research Assistant
Kay Smith
Interns
Chris Crain
Ellen Sears

Editorial Board
David R. Gergen, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick,
Irving Kristol, Howard Penniman,
Austin Ranney, Richard M. Scammon,
Laurence H. Silberman, Herbert Stein,
and Richard J. Whalen

Editorial Associate
Marilyn M. Potter
Assistants
John Benson
Lois Timms

Art & Design Director
Pat Taylor
Chart Illustrator
Hördur Karlsson
Staff Editor
Elizabeth D. Ashooh

PUBLIC OPINION, June/July 1985, Vol. 8, No. 3. Published bimonthly by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. Copyright 1985 American Enterprise Institute. Subscription rates: $26.00 for one year, $48.00 for two years. Individual copy: $5.00. Information on bulk orders of multiple subscriptions available on request. Editorial and business offices: c/o AEI, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Send changes of address and all subscription correspondence to Circulation Department, c/o AEI, same address. "American Enterprise Institute" and are registered service marks of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

ISSN 0149-9157

CONTENTS

2 **HARD TIMES: THE PUBLIC ON POVERTY**
by I. A. Lewis and William Schneider
Are the poor to be blamed for their plight? How well did the War on Poverty work? Do welfare payments encourage fathers to leave their families? Are the poor lazy? We've heard from the experts; now we can see what ordinary Americans think—including those whose opinions are based on experience, the poor themselves.

8 **THE POVERTY PROBLEM OF THE EIGHTIES**
by Karl Zinsmeister
By paying so much attention to crimes against children, we may be slighting a much larger problem—poverty among the very young.

13 **IS POVERTY GOOD FOR THE PRESS?**
by Leslie Lenkowsky
Poverty has provided a rich lode for reporters, but they have contented themselves with surface mining.

16 **FOLLOWING THE LEADERS: HOW RONALD REAGAN AND MARGARET THATCHER HAVE CHANGED PUBLIC OPINION**
by David R. Gergen
Have Americans embraced Ronald Reagan's conservative agenda over the last four years?

17 by Anthony King
Britons may have rallied to Mrs. Thatcher's Falklands War, but not to all of her conservative prescriptions for their society.

20 **REAGAN RATINGS: THE STORY THE MEDIA MISSED**
by Everett Carll Ladd
The man neither rose so high nor fell so far as the media would have had us believe.

21 **OPINION ROUNDUP**
Reagan's Ratings, Poverty, Defense, School Prayer, Death Penalty, What's In and Out.

42 **COMPARING CHIEF EXECUTIVES**
by George C. Edwards
Guess who may have been the least well-liked recent president? Mr. Teflon himself. How Reagan's ratings stack up.

45 **THE NEW PROFESSIONALISM OF THE OLDEST PARTY**
by Xandra Kayden
A hopeful voice amid pessimistic keenings about the future of the Democratic party.

48 **THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY SALVATION INDUSTRY**
by Byron E. Shafer
With so many busy trying to save the Democrats, someone needed to establish some intellectual order. This well-known political scientist disentangles four schools of redemption.

53 **THE LIFE QUALITY INDEX**
by Gordon S. Black
Measuring the good—and bad—life.

by I. A. Lewis and William Schneider

Hard Times: The Public on Poverty

(Continued from front cover)

. . . the poor are not very different; they have the same values and aspirations as everyone else. With one major distinction: They know more about poverty than the rest of us do. They know which stereotypes about poverty are true and which are false. For instance:

- "Most poor people lack basic social and occupational skills." (False, according to the poor)
- "Anti-poverty programs have seldom worked in the past." (True, they say)
- "There are jobs available for anyone who is willing to work." (False)
- "Poor young women often have babies so they can collect welfare." (True)

In April, the *Los Angeles Times* interviewed 2,444 people, including an oversample of 272 individuals who, according to federal government guidelines, were living in poverty. The poll found precious little evidence of "a new selfishness" in American culture. On one hand, the American public has an enormous reserve of sympathy for the poor and for their plight. On the other hand, there is plenty of cynicism and even fatalism about government efforts to eliminate poverty. Those attempts haven't worked in the past, people feel, and they are not likely to work in the future. The poor themselves are inclined to agree with this assessment.

The Reagan administration shares the public view that many of these programs have failed, and it has tried to translate that aspect of the public's critique into policy. While the safety net for the most destitute has been preserved, the vigor with which past administrations approached anti-poverty programs has been missing in this one. The centerpieces of this administration have been efforts to get inflation and government spending under control. Supply-siders optimistically projected that a rising economic tide would lift all boats, even those under water.

According to the poll, the public does not buy this argument. Americans believe that it is proper and necessary for the federal government to take action to help the poor, even if its record in this area is not encouraging. That is essentially a moral conviction, and it overrides what people know to be the practical difficulties of mounting a war on poverty. People think that a lot of the money we have spent on behalf of the poor has been wasted or intercepted; the poor agree. People also acknowledge that we really don't know how to solve the poverty problem; the poor also agree with that. But neither of these practical considerations reverses the basic moral consensus that it is a primary responsibility of government to fight poverty. The fact that the government does not do it particularly well does not mean it shouldn't do it at all. On that point, the poor and the nonpoor resoundingly agree.

One of the clearest examples of sympathy for the poor in this study is the conviction that money and wealth ought to be more evenly shared by a larger percentage of the population. Income redistribution is supported by every income group, including those who make more than $75,000 a year. Nationwide, the public favors a more even distribution by two to one.

Also, a majority of Americans do not believe that poor people prefer to stay on welfare. By better than two to one (63 to 25 percent), they say the opposite is true: that poor people would rather earn their own living. And fewer than one American in four believes that we are "coddling" the poor. In fact, two out of three Americans believe that the poor can hardly get by on what the government gives them.

Whether the poor contribute as much as they take from society may be disputed by some, but there is little doubt about it among the majority of the public. Only 21 percent say that the poor don't pay their fair share of taxes, while 75 percent reject that view.

Moreover, by better than two to one, the public rejects the idea that poor people are worse off because they have less inborn ability to get ahead. Only 29 percent support that view, while fully 62 percent disagree.

Sympathy for the poor may be associated with the view that people who live in poverty don't hold steady jobs. After all, isn't that why they're in poverty? Only 28 percent think a large proportion of poor people hold steady jobs. Among poor people, however, 40 percent think that is the case. Their opinions seem closer to the truth. In fact, 44 percent of the poor people who responded to this study report that they do indeed work: 33 percent hold full-time jobs, 7 percent work part time, and 4 percent are self-employed. Apparently about a third of the poor hold steady jobs that are so low-paying that they don't provide an escape from poverty.

Not only are Americans sympathetic to the poor, but they are also willing to dig into their pockets to help. A clear majority of Americans would, in principle, favor an additional one-cent-a-dollar sales tax to be used to help the poor. The idea is supported by most demographic groups (people over sixty-five are one exception). Understandably, the poor themselves support the tax somewhat more enthusiastically (68 percent) than do others (56 percent).

It may come as no surprise that a substantial portion of the general public thinks poor people are lazy: 25 percent of the respondents in the *Los Angeles Times* poll express that opinion, and about the same percentage (23 percent) say they're not sure if that is the case. Together these two groups nearly equal the half who are convinced that the poor are hard-working. What may be surprising to some, however, are the numbers of poor people who agree with this evaluation. More than a third of the poor say either that poor people are lazy or that one can't be sure about it.

As can be seen in the table on pages 6 and 7, sympathy for the poor is notably stronger among women than among men. Women are more likely to see poverty as a long-term condition, to feel that the poor lack basic social and occupational skills, and to believe that conditions for those living in poverty are bad. The difference between men and women appears to be linked to a fatalistic view prevalent among women, particularly women who are not poor. Here is what happened, for instance, when respondents were asked whether most poor people remain poor for a long time and whether government knows how to solve poverty.

	Most poor remain poor	*Government doesn't know how to solve poverty*
Nonpoor women	79%	80%
Nonpoor men	68	66

Poor women are strongly supportive of more direct forms of aid; they are more likely than poor men to say that the purpose of the welfare system is to provide for the immediate needs of poor people rather than to help them get back on their feet again, and to favor spending money on direct aid rather than "trying to eliminate the causes of poverty."

One of the most striking findings of the *Los Angeles Times* poll is the widespread conviction that the federal government must take responsibility for the poor and must play a vigorous role in combatting poverty. Seventy-three percent of the American public favor federal government actions on behalf of the poor, while only 18 percent oppose such actions. Moreover, only 14 percent accept the view that poverty in the United States can be handled mainly by volunteer efforts; no less than 78 percent feel that there must be "substantial government involvement."

By two to one, those interviewed feel that the government ought to spend more rather than less money on poverty programs. When given a list and asked who on it should have the greatest responsibility for helping the poor, one-third said the government, far more than said churches (17 percent), families and relatives (12 percent), or voluntary charities (7 percent). Twenty-one percent said "the poor themselves," which still fell behind the proportion who said the government. Interestingly, the poor and the nonpoor both place the government first on the list (34 percent and 33 percent, respectively). The poor, however, are somewhat more likely to give primary responsibility to the poor themselves and to churches.

Still, when asked directly whether "government is responsible for the well-being of all its citizens and has an obligation to take care of them," or whether "people are responsible for their own well-being, and have an obligation to take care of themselves," public sentiment tips strongly toward the latter view. In fact, the poor and the nonpoor are no different on this issue. The same basic values are shared by the poor and the nonpoor: People are ultimately responsible for their own well-being, but government bears the primary responsibility for helping people when they need it.

Government and the Needy

Among the nonpoor, both women and blacks tend to be more supportive of an active government role. But it is among the black poor that one finds a constituency with a high degree of confidence in government action. A majority of the black poor believe that government, rather than people themselves, are responsible for citizens' well-being; the figure is 30 percent among nonpoor blacks, 25 percent for the female poor, and 12 percent for the white poor. A majority of the black poor names the government as having greatest responsibility for helping the poor, compared to 38 percent among nonpoor blacks, 36 percent among the female poor, and 23 percent among the white poor. Most striking is that no less than 60 percent of poor blacks believe that the government knows how to eliminate poverty, which is more than twice the proportion who feel that it is the case among the female poor and among nonpoor blacks (both 27 percent).

Ronald Reagan once said, "In the war on poverty, poverty won." Americans are inclined to agree. Forty-five percent are of the opinion that the efforts of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations made things "somewhat better" for the poor; only 10 percent say they made things "much better." Seventeen percent believe the war on poverty had no impact, and 11 percent say it made matters worse. Even among the poor, only 14 percent felt the war on poverty made things much better. The figure among poor blacks, however, was 31 percent.

Giving money to the poor outright is surely one way to lift people out of poverty. As a matter of fact, that method has a fairly good track record. Medicare, social security, and similar transfer programs have been among the most effective poverty programs over the past thirty years, even though they are not aimed specifically at the poor. Meanwhile, programs designed to strike at the roots of poverty have not been spectacularly successful. Nevertheless, the public insists, two to one, that poverty funds should be directed toward eliminating the causes of poverty rather than giving money to poor people directly.

Eighty-nine percent of the nation is convinced that poverty will always be a major problem for our society. Only 8 percent think it is a problem that will be solved. Moreover, there is no clear consensus about the objectives of anti-poverty programs. About half of the nation thinks they should be rehabilitation programs, designed to help poor people get back on their feet. But the other half thinks they are simply maintenance programs that should provide for the needs of poor people while they are poor. And finally, Americans are not convinced that we know how to set things right. Seventy percent believe the government doesn't know enough about how to eliminate poverty in the United States. Only 22 percent think it does.

The Embarrassment of Riches

It used to be that financial success attested to one's virtue and diligence and that poverty was a symptom of moral degeneracy—the result, not the cause, of vice. In recent decades, though, experts have begun interpreting our concern with economic success as a sure sign that Americans have tumbled into turpitude. Writers over the last few years have denounced a new American greediness, for example, and the citizenry's obsession with creature comforts. College students have been collectively condemned as a generation whose plans for the future take in nothing loftier than the bottom line. Maybe we *are* more interested today in the outward signs of success than we were in the distant past. But what we are *not* is uniformly respectful of riches or the rich. People tend to hold wealth in low esteem these days, no matter how much they might yearn for it.

If we can take the public at its word, they value a "high income" far less than "following God's will," "helping needy people," or "helping better America." It ranked seventeenth in a list of nineteen social values offered in a Gallup poll, trailed only by "enough leisure time" and "social recognition." (Whites placed it at eighteen of nineteen, and blacks put it in eighth place.) And if we gauge our values by what we wish to pass on to our children, then "getting rich" is indeed a low priority: Only 39 percent agreed that it is "a highly important objective for a young person to have," and in another survey, only 37 percent believed that "men like Henry Ford, Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, and John D. Rockefeller should be held up to young people as models to be admired and imitated." Eleven percent, in fact, felt these individuals were examples of "selfish and ambitious men who would do anything to get ahead."

Richly Deserved

Since most people are not rich, there may be reasons for their dim view of wealth other than the good citizenship and philanthropic instincts that these polls indicate. One detects a certain wistful note from the 77 percent who agreed that money cannot buy happiness, and from a similar 77 percent in another poll who insisted that "how much money [a person] earn[s] and how wealthy [he is]" is no real measure of an individual's worth. At least those of us whose earnings don't amount to much hope this is true. Or maybe we're just afraid of money: Almost half (47 percent) of one sample went along with the notion that "money is the root of all evil." If people believe that, then they certainly can't think much of those who have lots of the cursed stuff. And they don't.

The Roper Organization once offered people the opportunity to air their biases, first encouraging their confessions by explaining that "It is human, even if not always admirable, to be 'anti-something'. . . ." From a list of nineteen groups and practices that might be considered objectionable, "anti-rich" pulled the eighth slot, less than halfway down; hippies, smoking, welfare, and drinking

Why Poverty Programs Fail

If Americans sometimes seem impatient with the poor, it is because they feel that little we have done in the past has actually worked: 58 percent think anti-poverty programs have seldom worked, but only 32 percent think they have often worked. This assessment is shared by poor people, who arrive at nearly the same conclusion (56 percent to 31 percent negative).

Most people feel the reason for the failure of anti-poverty programs is either that the money was wasted on useless projects that didn't help poor people or that the money never filtered through to the poor who needed it. Among poor people themselves, the feeling is even stronger that poverty money was intercepted before it got to them. Anti-poverty programs haven't worked very well because we don't know enough about how to make them work.

Part of the frustration about poverty can be summed up in the widespread conviction that, far from fostering independence and a desire to escape from poverty, current programs make poor people even more dependent on welfare and encourage them to remain in their present condition. Nearly three out of five think that, while only one in five says that welfare benefits give people a chance to stand on their own two feet and get started again. This conviction is not so strongly held by the poor themselves, however, with 31 percent saying that poverty programs give poor people a chance, and only 43 percent saying that they make them more dependent.

As to specifics, it is widely believed that welfare encourages husbands to avoid their family responsibilities. Sixty-one percent of respondents said that welfare often encourages fathers to leave home because, if they do, it is easier for wives to collect welfare. (The principal federal welfare program is Aid to Families with Dependent Children.) Only 33 percent said that seldom happens. Some support is lent to this view by the attitudes of people in poverty, which are nearly identical on this question (60 percent to 32 percent think it often happens).

On the question of whether poor young women have babies so they can collect welfare, our sample is undecided: 48 percent say it happens often, and 46 percent say it happens seldom. But for poor people, there seems to be little doubt. Sixty-four percent of the people who live in poverty say that poor women often have babies to get welfare. And better than three out of four (78 percent) poor women who have babies say that often happens.

The Work Ethic and the Poor

Who should get the most help? There is clear agreement among the public at large and also among the poor: Children and the handicapped need help, and also able-bodied men who can't find work. Less deserving of

---

by Victoria Sackett

were the big losers, then government, labor, and the establishment. (The press came in right behind the rich, perhaps because TV news commentators are among the occupations that the public thinks are overpaid.) To make matters worse, many suspect that a millionaire's gains may be ill-gotten: 46 percent selected organized crime as a "field of work" that produces the most millionaires.

Apart from courting evil and consorting with unsavory companions, the wealthy display several other undesirable traits to pluralities of the public. They use their money mostly to protect their position; they don't pay enough taxes; they make illegal political contributions; they didn't work hard to earn the wealth they have; they got where they are by exploiting people; they don't feel a responsibility to society because of their wealth; and, as if to reward their bad character, they (along with corporations) "run the country . . . and get better treatment in the courts than the poor." But the real stinger is that they just get richer, while the poor grow poorer, according to 74 percent of the population.

Sharing the Wealth

With all these indictments against the rich, it comes as something of a surprise that people have a few nice things to say about them, as well. Most of these fall into the category of side effects of wealth, not direct praise for its possessors: Millionaires' investments help to create jobs and prosperity, and to employ people; and the rich themselves cannot be held responsible for keeping the common man from having his proper share of the wealth. The one virtue the public is willing to grant is that millionaires contribute generously to charitable causes (though people might suspect this has something to do with the disproportionately light tax burden they believe the wealthy enjoy).

Oddly enough, a dislike for the ends of wealth fails to interfere with general approval of the means for pursuing it. Ninety-five percent see nothing wrong with a man "trying to make as much money as he honestly can"; 79 percent believe there should not be a $100,000 limit on annual income, when this is expressed as a general proposition; and most people agree that it is the people with more ability who wind up earning more. When pressed, though, only 26 percent in a different survey think a person should be able to earn as much as $500,000 in a year. Anything beyond that, perhaps, and you're flirting with the devil (or the Cosa Nostra).

Far from believing as our ancestors did that wealth invites esteem, then, do we—the richest nation in the world—scorn that which sets us apart? Well, not exactly. When asked what they daydream about, most people identified "travel abroad" first, but right behind it was "being rich." And what would we be willing to do to get there? If 20,000 upscale, affluent *Psychology Today* readers offer any clue, most would be willing to take a job they didn't like or move to a foreign country for a million dollars, or, the most popular response, "have sex with a stranger (once)." Maybe our forefathers were wrong, after all.

Table 1

	In Poverty					Not In Poverty							
	Black	White	Men	Women	Total	Black	White	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	National
Reagan budget cuts left truly needy unprotected, or "safety net" still in place													
Unprotected	78%	53%	63%	60%	61%	78%	43%	42%	52%	47%	45%	55%	50%
"Safety net" in place	6	31	19	24	22	9	48	47	40	43	44	36	40
Don't know	16	15	18	15	16	13	8	9	8	9	10	9	9
During last twelve months, donated to charity or social service for poor, got involved other ways, gave time to volunteer activities for poor													
Only donated money or goods	46	44	49	39	43	70	59	56	64	59	55	58	57
Only volunteer activities	1	2	0	4	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1
Both donated and volunteered	17	19	7	31	22	18	27	22	28	25	20	28	24
Not donated or volunteered	8	7	18	6	10	3	4	4	3	4	6	4	5
Don't know	20	13	12	12	12	3	1	6	1	4	7	2	5
Welfare benefits give poor people chance to stand on own two feet and get started again, or make poor people dependent and encourage them to stay poor													
Get started again	43	27	41	25	31	19	15	15	17	16	18	19	19
Neither (vol.)	19	7	3	13	9	11	13	12	11	11	11	11	11
Encourage people to stay poor	31	45	36	48	43	58	60	59	64	61	56	61	59
Don't know	5	21	18	14	16	11	12	14	7	11	14	8	11
Most poor people are lazy, or most are hard-working													
Lazy	22	15	18	25	22	16	27	26	27	26	25	26	25
Hard-working	69	61	50	63	58	62	46	51	46	48	51	49	50
Don't know	7	16	23	10	15	21	26	22	26	24	22	24	23
Most poor people have been poor for a long time and will probably remain that way, or most move into poverty and then out of it in a relatively brief period of time													
Remain poor	46	68	63	47	53	50	81	68	79	73	67	74	71
Out in brief time	39	23	26	45	38	42	13	24	14	19	24	19	21
Don't know	13	8	10	8	8	8	6	7	7	7	8	7	7
Poor people lack basic social and occupational skills, or their abilities are not all that much different from other Americans													
Lack basic skills	40	37	42	38	40	44	54	42	60	51	42	55	49
Not all that much different	55	56	45	57	52	48	41	52	35	43	51	38	44
Don't know	3	6	11	5	7	8	4	4	5	5	5	7	6
Conditions for poor people in this country—like education, housing, job opportunities, health care, . . .—are very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad													
Good	46	42	48	48	48	67	58	71	50	61	68	48	58
Bad	53	52	52	47	48	31	34	22	43	32	26	43	35
Not aware	1	3	0	3	2	1	6	5	6	5	4	5	5
Don't know	0	3	0	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	4	2
Thinking of ten or fifteen years ago . . .													
Good	52	59	51	54	53	60	50	57	47	52	56	47	51
Bad	37	26	36	34	35	24	32	22	38	30	24	36	31
Not aware	2	8	1	7	5	4	5	10	2	6	9	4	6
Don't know	9	7	12	5	7	12	13	11	13	12	11	13	12
Will be ten or fifteen years from now . . .													
Good	23	37	46	27	34	48	37	43	35	39	43	32	37
Bad	58	46	42	58	52	45	44	34	51	42	35	50	43
Not aware	9	6	6	5	6	0	4	4	2	3	5	4	4
Don't know	10	11	6	10	8	7	15	19	12	16	17	14	16
Poor people find it very hard to get work, or there are jobs available for anyone who is willing to work													
Very hard to get work	75	53	52	64	59	57	35	37	41	39	39	47	43
Jobs are available	25	42	47	21	31	39	63	61	57	59	59	49	54
Don't know	0	4	0	15	9	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	3

	In Poverty					Not In Poverty							Na-tion-al
	Black	White	Men	Women	Total	Black	White	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	
On average, poor people have less education, more difficulty holding jobs, and live in worse conditions than other people. These differences are mainly because poor people have less in-born ability to get ahead													
Yes	28%	33%	29%	32%	31%	30%	29%	25%	33%	29%	26%	33%	29%
No	62	54	63	58	60	67	61	69	57	63	68	56	62
Don't know	10	10	8	8	8	3	9	5	10	7	5	10	8
Most poor people prefer to stay on welfare, or most would rather earn their own living													
Prefer welfare	6	19	20	20	20	18	25	23	28	25	22	27	25
Earn their own living	79	73	61	73	68	78	60	59	65	62	60	66	63
Don't know	15	5	17	5	10	4	15	18	7	13	18	7	12
Some people think welfare encourages husbands to avoid family responsibilities because it's easier for wives to get aid for children if father has left. This happens almost always, often, seldom, or almost never													
Often	28	65	67	55	60	48	64	54	68	61	56	65	61
Seldom	59	28	27	35	32	40	31	40	28	34	38	29	33
Don't know	13	7	6	10	8	12	5	6	4	5	6	6	6
Poor young women have babies so they can collect welfare: almost always, often, seldom, or almost never													
Often	58	59	54	70	64	51	45	39	49	44	41	54	48
Seldom	32	24	29	20	23	45	50	56	47	51	52	41	46
Don't know	10	17	17	10	13	4	5	5	4	5	7	5	6
We are coddling the poor—poor people live well on welfare—or they can hardly get by on what the government gives them													
Coddling	8	32	38	19	26	2	25	19	27	23	21	24	23
Hardly get by	82	63	45	76	64	79	66	71	64	68	68	67	68
Don't know	8	5	15	5	9	19	8	8	9	8	9	8	8
Anti-poverty programs have almost always, often, seldom, or almost never worked													
Often	25	35	31	31	31	60	27	32	34	33	32	31	32
Seldom	55	58	50	59	56	35	64	63	55	59	62	56	58
Don't know	20	7	19	10	13	5	9	5	11	8	6	13	10
When poverty programs failed, it was because they were never given enough money to make them work, because money was wasted on useless projects that didn't help poor people, or because money was intercepted and never got to poor people who needed it													
Never given enough money	7	5	5	5	5	11	6	3	8	6	3	7	6
Wasted on projects	19	33	16	38	30	31	42	44	38	41	40	38	39
Never got to poor	63	46	50	50	50	45	43	34	47	40	37	48	42
Don't know	9	14	26	5	13	10	7	17	5	11	18	5	11
Best thing to do about poverty problem: make people less poor by giving them money; care for poor people by providing services; create government jobs and give them to poor people; educate people and train them so they can get jobs for themselves in private sector; or do nothing and wait for strong economy to lift poor out of poverty													
Give poor money	9	0	6	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Provide services for the poor	7	8	2	9	6	1	5	4	6	5	4	6	5
Create government jobs for the poor	48	25	40	26	32	11	17	14	19	17	17	22	20
Give poor people job training	35	61	47	62	56	86	76	78	73	75	74	69	71
Do nothing	1	2	3	0	1	0	1	3	1	2	3	1	2
Don't know	0	3	2	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

(Continued on page 59)

by David R. Gergen

Following the Leaders:

After turning back an assassin's bullet and standing up to cancer, Reagan has entered the pantheon of American politics, coming as close to a spot on Mt. Rushmore as any living president can. No matter what happens during the rest of his term, Americans will always have a warm place in their hearts for him.

Yet the higher Reagan climbs in public esteem, the more distance there appears between him personally and the programs he espouses. Throughout 1985, the paradox of his presidency is that the man has been extraordinarily popular while his agenda has been falling apart in Congress. And the public is mostly siding with Congress, not Reagan!

What is going on here? Since the early 1980s, it has been widely asserted that Reagan is riding the crest of a conservative wave that is engulfing the country. And almost everything one sees confirms that impression. We all know that Reagan has altered the terms of political debate: No longer do we argue about how much government we need but how little we can afford. Tax incentives are accepted as a path to economic growth. The Russians are no longer considered worthy of "a wee Christian kiss," and Democrats in Congress are hurriedly voting funds to support anti-Communist rebels in the Third World. Culturally, we've not only come into the yuppie era but perhaps driven right past it. It's now "new collar" baby-boom voters, with moderate incomes and service economy jobs. Only if you're living somewhere like Santa Monica could you fail to notice the difference, and even there things are changing. Just listen to Tom Hayden one day.

It's clear the pendulum has swung. But in light of recent developments on the Hill, it's worth asking: just how far? Is Reagan still transforming the system, or is he merely passing through? What can we say about his probable legacy?

Analyst Kevin Phillips argues that Reagan is increasingly becoming a national "father figure," beloved as a chief of state but less and less seen as a chief of government. Moreover, Phillips thinks that in the second term Reagan is pushing an agenda that is too extreme and threatens his revolution: "The underlying ideology that the president is seeking to implement—minimizing government's role in everything from trade, tax incentives, and transportation to agriculture, pensions, education, and local services—simply goes beyond public acceptance." Thus, Reagan soars in the polls after cancer surgery, the hostage crisis, and even Bitburg, but his personal popularity only camouflages the weakness of his programs.

In a recent interview with *U.S. News & World Report*, Governor Mario Cuomo expressed much the same point: "It happens to all of us who are in office. They

(Continued on page 55)

by Anthony King

How Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher Have Changed Public Opinion

No prime minister in this century except Winston Churchill has had a greater impact on British politics than Margaret Thatcher. She has bent the government to her will. The government has bent the nation to its will. Things will never be the same again.

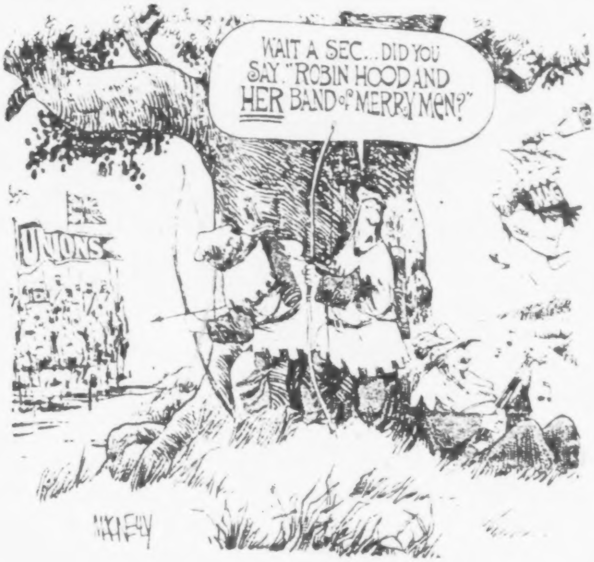
Or will they? The concept of irreversibility has been central to the government's thinking ever since it came to power six years ago. The aim has been to makes changes in Britain's economic and social structure so profound that no future government will be able to undo them—or even want to undo them. And in this effort Thatcher and her colleagues have had a number of important successes. One has been the sale of council houses (the equivalent of American public housing). Local authorities are now required by law to permit council-house tenants to buy their houses, on very favorable terms. Since 1979 some 1.9 million council houses have changed hands, and all over Britain the results can be seen in fresh paint, new front doors, and neatly kept gardens. The Labour party opposed the Tories' policy throughout Thatcher's first term and went on opposing it through the 1983 election campaign; but it has now virtually capitulated. If Labour returns to power, tenants who have bought their houses will be allowed to keep them. More significant, the obligation on local authorities to sell council houses will, with limited exceptions, remain. The British Conservatives' goal of a "property-owning democracy" is much nearer fulfillment than six years ago—and (a bonus) the evidence suggests that council tenants who buy their homes are somewhat more likely to vote for the Tory party.

Equally irreversible, at least in the short term, is Thatcher's privatization program. Ever since the war, the public sector in Britain has steadily encroached on the private, under Conservative governments as well as Labour (it was Edward Heath who nationalized Rolls-Royce). Now that process has been reversed, and on a far larger scale than probably most Americans realize. Since 1979 the government has sold off all or part of its holdings in British Aerospace, Associated British Ports, the National Freight Corporation, Amersham International (pioneers in biotechnology), Cable and Wireless (a major international telecommunications company), British Petroleum (BP), the British Sugar Corporation, the British National Oil Corporation, International Computers Limited, Jaguar Motors, and, most recently, British Telecom, the national phone company. Last year's sale of British Telecom shares was the largest in the history of capitalism; roughly one and three-quarter million Britons (including the present writer) now have a stake in the company. Labour is for the moment insisting that it will take British Telecom back into public ownership, but, were Labour returned to power, it would almost certainly conclude that it could not begin to afford the necessary compensation. In any case, even if British Telecom were renationalized, there is no way that a Labour government could afford to reacquire even a small proportion of the other state assets that have been privatized. (By the end of the next year, British Airways, too, will have gone.)

A few other acts of the Thatcher administration are probably also irreversible. For example, it would be politically very difficult for a Labour government to repeal new legislation requiring the use of secret ballots in the election of top trade union officials. And the great majority of Labour leaders now acknowledge that it is far too late to pull out of the European Community. But, at about this point, the principle of irreversibility ceases to operate. Has defense spending been increased? It can be cut. Has social spending been cut? Why, it can be increased. The Thatcher government is abolishing the Greater London Council and some other Labour-controlled local authorities; but Labour or any other future government could easily set them up again. The Thatcher government has eschewed corporatist-style discussions with business, the professions, and the trade unions; but any new government could decide to hold precisely such discussions on its first day.

Tough Teacher, Stubborn Pupils

Thatcher and her more committed colleagues—men like Nigel Lawson, the chancellor of the exchequer, and Norman Tebbit, the trade and industry minister—are acutely conscious of these limitations on their ability to control the future. They are, therefore, more concerned than most ministers to change not merely policies, but public attitudes. They want an altered climate of public opinion to be part of their legacy, constraining their successors' actions. Thatcher, in particular, aspires to be tutor to the nation. How apt have her pupils, the British people, proved so far? Data from the British Gallup poll and from Market and Opinion Research International (MORI) provide answers that are disconcerting from the Tories' point of view.


WAIT A SEC... DID YOU SAY "ROBIN HOOD AND HER BAND of MERRY MEN?"
UNIONS
MACNELLY

To be sure, the British public is largely indifferent to privatization. Opinion is fairly evenly divided; MORI last December found 44 percent supporting and 43 percent opposing the selling off of more state industries. More to the point, the issue arouses little public interest, and there is no reason to think that it will swing more than a handful of votes at the next election. Opposition to extensions of nationalization—still favored by Labour—is now so widespread that the polls have virtually stopped asking questions about it. And the government's measures to democratize unions have overwhelming support. Earlier this year MORI found 75 percent of trade union members favoring secret strike ballots and only slightly fewer, 70 percent, favoring the use of such ballots in union elections. The pro-reform majorities among nonunion members are, predictably, even larger.

But, nationalization and union democracy apart, the polls make it disturbingly clear that, while most Britons share Thatcher's fervent patriotism, they reject almost the whole of her economic philosophy. Worse, opinion is considerably less Thatcherite today than when Thatcher came to power. Far from educating the nation, the prime minister, it would seem, has been uneducating it.

Take unemployment. Shortly before the 1979 election, 18 percent of Gallup's monthly sample rated unemployment as the most urgent problem facing the country; today 80 percent do. The government, however, insists that there is little any government can do to create "real jobs" (one of its favorite phrases) and that inflation is a more important problem than unemployment and one that the government can actually do something about. The British public flatly disagrees. Gallup asks voters from time to time whether they think unemployment is the kind of problem no government can really solve, or whether they think it could be solved by a government determined to apply the right measures. The proportion thinking the problem is soluble, given a determined government, was 58 percent in August 1982 and was still 58 percent in August 1984. Almost exactly the same number, 57 percent, believe that "it *is* possible to have more people in jobs *and* low inflation at the same time," and 73 percent maintain that "causing unemployment to rise is not an acceptable way to deal with inflation." Table 1 tells a vivid story of how the public's priorities have changed during the Thatcher years—in a direction opposite to the one she herself would prefer. As the table shows, 75 percent now think the government should give greater attention to reducing unemployment than to curbing inflation; only 18 percent think the opposite. In February MORI put the point even more bluntly: Did voters think that the government should alter its economic course and adopt measures directly to create more jobs, even at the risk of pushing up inflation? Fifty-nine percent said yes, they thought it should.

Table 1

Question: Which do you think the government should give greater attention to—trying to curb inflation or trying to reduce unemployment?

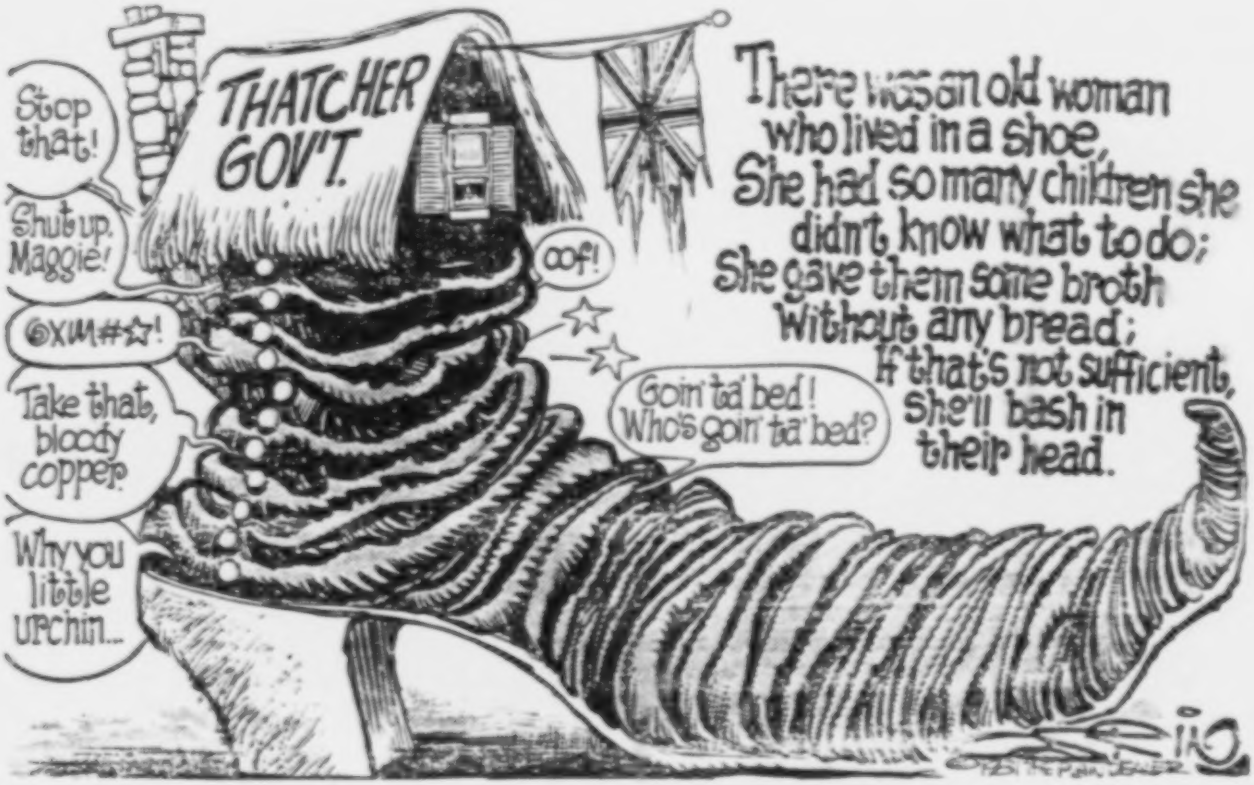
	Oct. 1976	June 1980	Nov. 1980	Jan. 1982	Nov. 1982	May 1983	Aug. 1984
Curb inflation	54%	52%	30%	23%	21%	22%	18%
Reduce unemployment	36	42	62	70	73	69	75
Don't know	10	7	8	8	6	9	7

Source: Surveys by Social Surveys (The Gallup Poll) Ltd., London, latest that of August 1984.

Even on matters of detail, government and electorate diverge. Thatcher and Lawson insist that the way to bring down unemployment is to reduce income tax and social security contributions, not to waste money on public works (or, as the British currently call it, "infrastructure"). Accordingly, MORI last March, shortly after the budget, asked which method voters thought would be more effective in creating jobs: tax reductions or "spending the same amount of money on projects like building roads, houses, or sewers." Only 23 percent opted for tax cuts, 73 percent for road-building, houses, and sewers. Among Tory voters the ratio was similar: 32 percent to 61 percent.

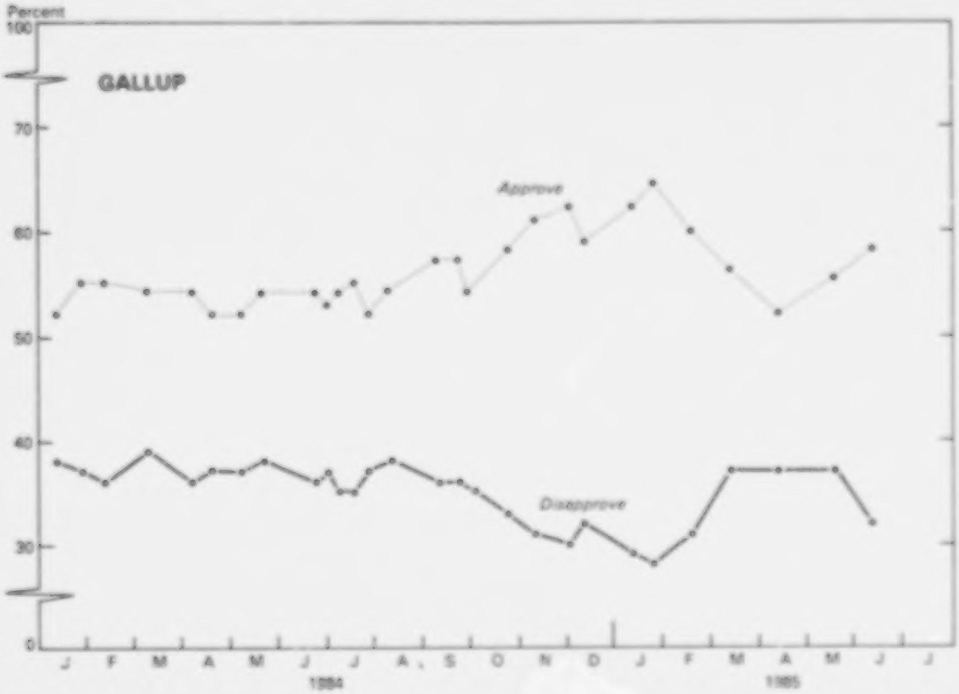
The Thatcher government also preaches a stern, individualistic morality. Each person's fate is in his or her own hands. The unemployed should get on their bikes and look for work. Self-reliance is better than reliance on government. No idea is more basic to Thatcherism than this; none figures larger in the prime minister's rhetoric. But, again, leaders and led are drifting apart. Less than one in ten of Gallup's respondents now believe that most of the unemployed are out of work through their own fault, and the proportion believing that, if a person is poor, "lack of effort" is probably to blame has fallen from 33 percent before Thatcher came to power to 21 percent today; the proportion believing that the fault is likely to lie with "circumstances beyond [the person's] control" has correspondingly risen, from 30 percent to 49 percent. Table 2 tells its own bleak story: Feelings of self-reliance are less widespread now, in Margaret Thatcher's Britain, than they were under Clement Attlee's socialist administration just after the war.

(Continued on page 58)


Stop that!
Shut up, Maggie!
@XIM#☆!
Take that, bloody copper.
Why you little urchin...
THATCHER GOV'T.
oof!
Goin' ta' bed! Who's goin' ta' bed?
There was an old woman who lived in a shoe, She had so many children she didn't know what to do; She gave them some broth Without any bread; If that's not sufficient, She'll bash in their head.

REAGAN'S RATINGS: STEADY AS HE GOES

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president?

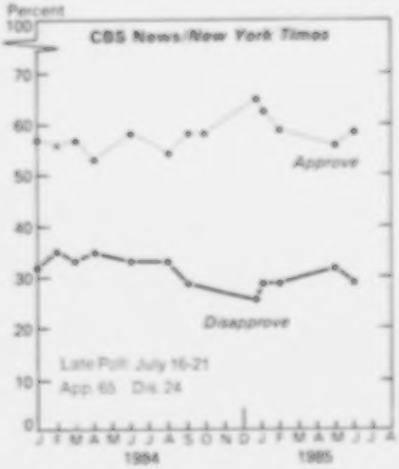


	App.	Dis.
1984		
Jan. 13-16	52%	38%
27-30	55	37
Feb. 10-13	55	36
Mar. 16-19	54	39
Apr. 5-9	54	36
11-15	52	37
May 3-5	52	37
18-20	54	38
June 22-25	54	36
June 29-July 2	53	37
July 6-9	54	35
13-16	55	35
27-30	52	37
Aug. 10-13	54	38
Sept. 7-10	57	36
21-24	57	36
Sept. 28-Oct. 1	54	35
Oct. 26-29	58	33
Nov. 9-12	61	31
Nov. 30-Dec. 3	62	30
Dec. 7-10	59	32
1985		
Jan. 11-14	62	29
25-28	64	28
Feb. 15-18	60	31
Mar. 8-11	56	37
Apr. 12-15	52	37
May 17-20	55	37
June 7-10	58	32

Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of June 7-10, 1985.

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president?

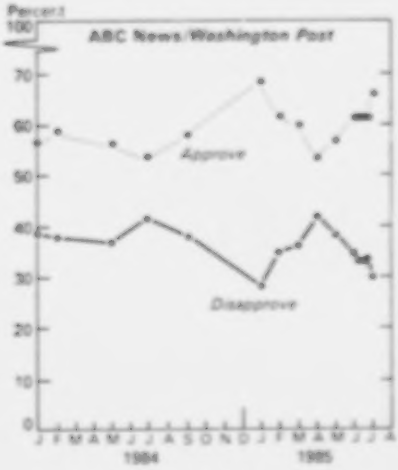
	App.	Dis.
1984		
Jan.	57%	32%
Feb.	56	35
Mar.	57	33
Apr.	53	35
June	58	33
Aug.	54	33
Sept.	58	29
Oct.	58	32
1985		
Jan.	65	26
Jan.	62	29
Feb.	59	29
May	56	32
June	59	29
July	65	24



Late Poll: July 16-21
App. 65 Dis. 24

Source: Surveys by CBS News/*New York Times*, latest that of May 29-June 2, 1985.

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president?

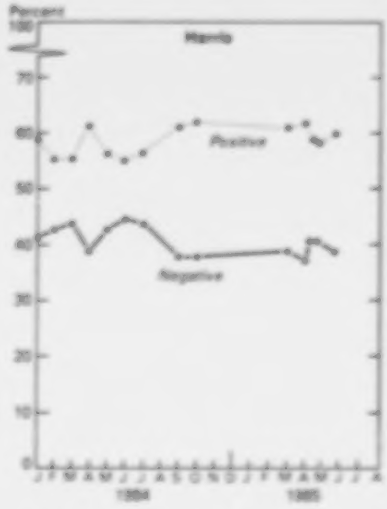


	App.	Dis.
1984		
Jan.	57%	39%
Feb.	59	38
May	57	37
July	54	41
Sept.	58	38
1985		
Jan.	68	28
Feb.	62	35
Mar.	60	36
Apr.	54	42
May	57	38
June 13-16	62	35
17	62	33
19	62	33
20-22	62	34
June 30-July 1	66	30

Source: Surveys by ABC News/*Washington Post*, latest that of June 30-July 1, 1985.

Question: How would you rate the job that President Reagan is doing as president—excellent, pretty good, only fair, or poor?

	1984	
	Pos.	**Neg.**
Jan.	58%	41%
Feb.	55	43
Mar.	55	44
Apr.	61	39
May	56	43
June	55	45
July	56	44
Sept.	61	38
Oct.	62	38
	1985	
Mar.	61	39
Apr.	62	37
May	59	41
June	58	41
June	60	39

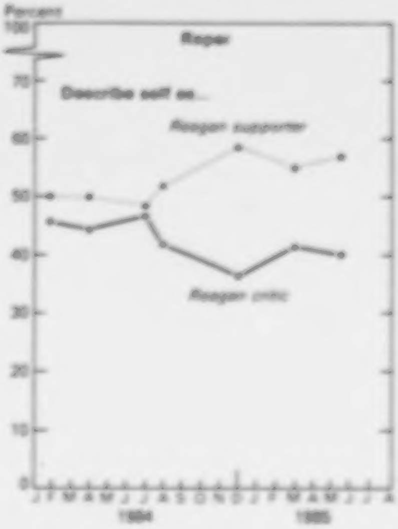


Note: Positive = "Excellent" + "Pretty good"; Negative = "Only fair" + "Poor." March-October 1984 sample = likely voters.

Source: Surveys by Louis Harris and Associates, latest that of June 26-30, 1985.

Question: How do you feel about President Reagan—at the present time, would you describe yourself as a strong Reagan supporter, a moderate Reagan supporter, a moderate critic of Reagan, or a strong critic of Reagan?

	1984	
	Sup.	**Crit.**
Feb.	50%	46%
Apr.	50	44
July	48	47
Aug.	52	42
Dec.	58	37
	1985	
Mar.	55	41
June	57	40



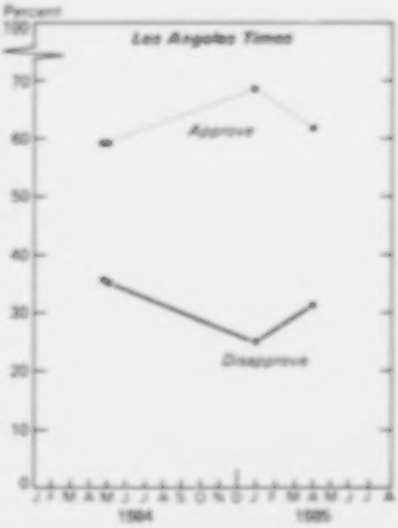
Note: Supporter = "Strong supporter" + "Moderate supporter"; Critic = "Strong critic" + "Moderate critic."

Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization, latest that of June 15-22, 1985.

Sample sizes for pages 21 and 22 are over 1,200 with the exception of ABC News/*Washington Post* polls of *July* 1984 and *June* 1985. "Don't know/no opinion" not shown.

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Reagan is handling his job as president? (WAIT FOR REPLY) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

	1984	
	App.	**Dis.**
May	59%	36%
May	59	35
	1985	
Jan.	68	25
Apr.	62	31

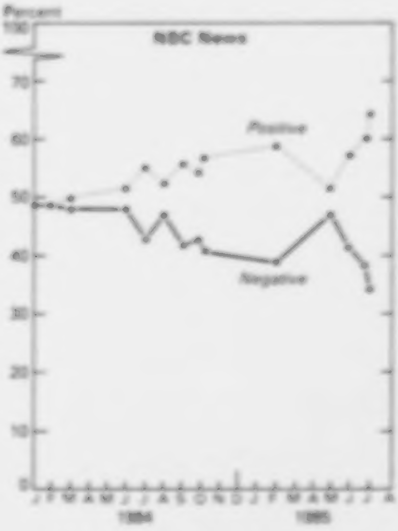


Note: Approve = "Approve strongly" + "Approve somewhat"; Disapprove = "Disapprove strongly" + "Disapprove somewhat."

Source: Surveys by the *Los Angeles Times*, latest that of April 20-25, 1985.

Question: What kind of a job do you think Ronald Reagan is doing as president . . . do you think he is doing an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job, or do you think he is doing a poor job?

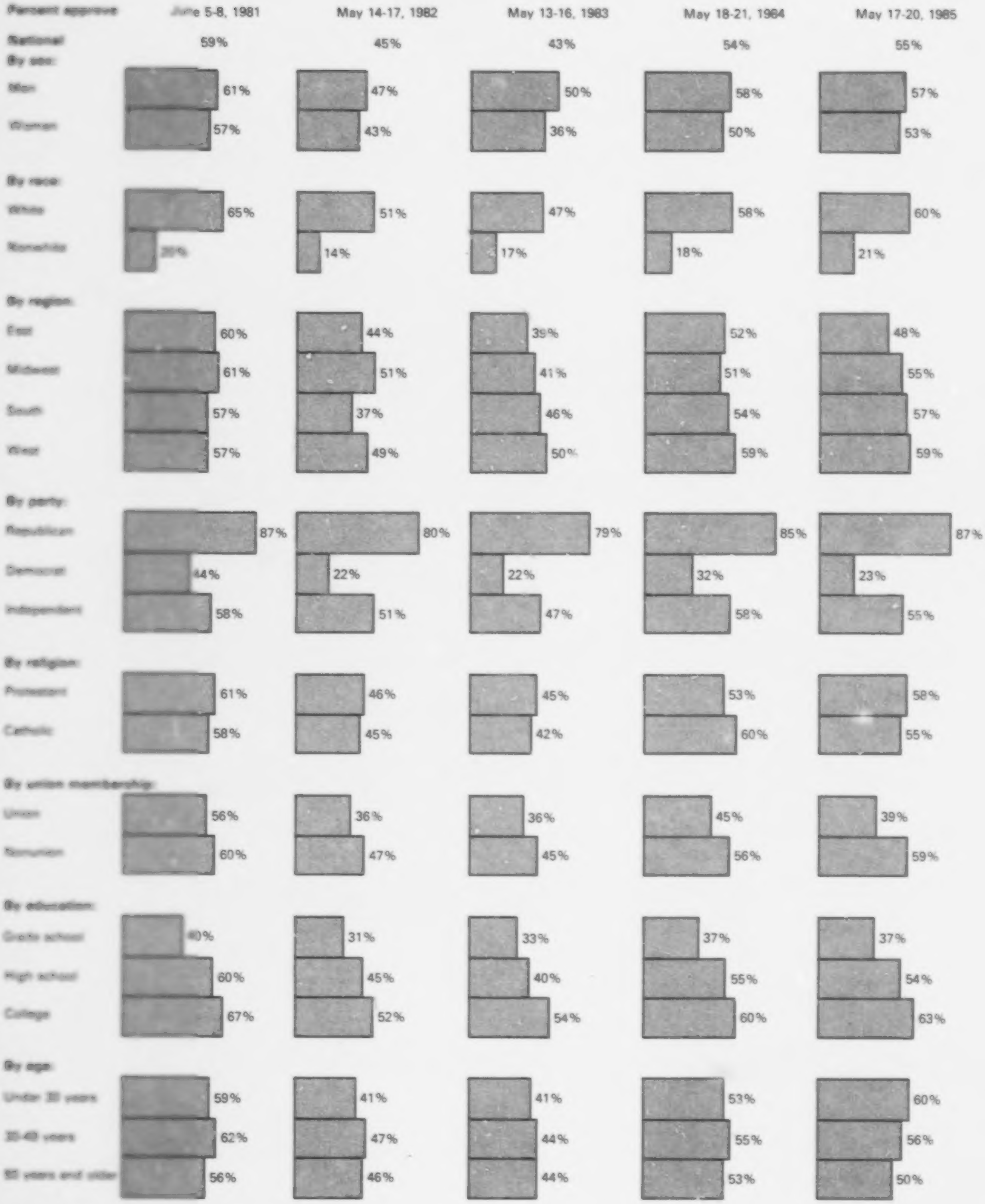
	1984	
	Pos.	**Neg.**
Jan.	49%	49%
Feb.	49	49
Mar.	50	48
June	52	48
July	55	43
Aug.	52	47
Sept.	56	42
Oct.	54	43
Nov.	57	41
	1985	
Feb.	59	39
May	51	47
June	57	41
July	60	38
July	64	34



Note: Positive = "Excellent" + "Good"; Negative = "Only fair" + "Poor." Sample size for July 2, 1985 = 800.

Source: Survey by NBC News, latest that of July 15-16, 1985.

REAGAN RATINGS BY GALLUP SUBGROUPS

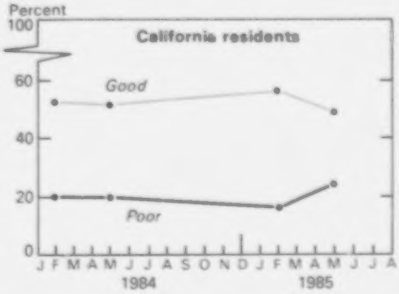


Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of May 17-20, 1985.

Selected State Ratings of Reagan

Question: Overall, what kind of job do you think Ronald Reagan is doing as president—an excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor job?

	Good	Poor
1984		
Feb.	53%	20%
May	52	20
1985		
Feb.	57	16
May	49	24

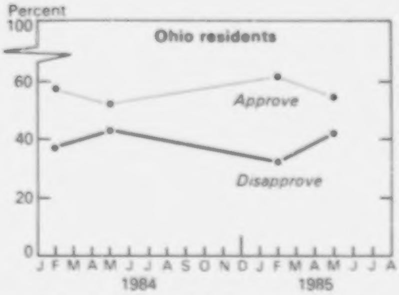


Note: Good = "Excellent" + "Good"; Poor = "Poor" + "Very poor." Sample size = 768 for February 1984; 714 registered voters for May 1984; 1,001 for February 1985; 1,018 for May 1985. Fair is not shown = 26%, 27%, 25%, 25%, respectively.

Source: Surveys by the Field Institute for the California Poll, latest that of April 30-May 7, 1985.

Question: Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Reagan is handling his job as president?

	App.	Dis.
1984		
Feb.	57%	37%
May	52	43
1985		
Feb.	61	32
May	55	42

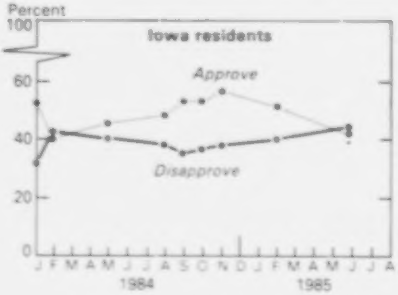


Note: Sample size = 809 for February 1984; 822 for May 1984; 826 for February 1985; 821 for May 1985.

Source: Surveys by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati, latest that of April 30-May 15, 1985.

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president?

	App.	Dis.
1984		
Jan.	52%	31%
Feb.	40	43
May	46	40
Aug.	48	38
Sept.	53	35
Oct.	53	36
Nov.	56	37
1985		
Feb.	51	40
June	43	45

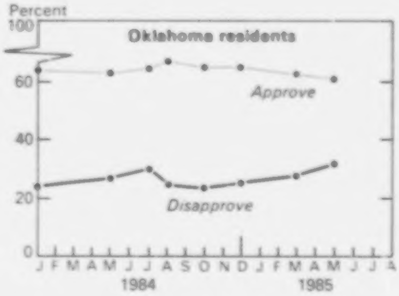


Note: Sample size = 1,003 for January and February 1984; 1,004 for May 1984; 1,003 for August 1984; 1,002 for September 1984; 1,000 for October 1984; 1,208 for November 1984; 801 for February 1985; 804 for June 1985.

Source: Surveys by the *Des Moines Register and Tribune* Company for the Iowa Poll, latest that of May 29-June 11, 1985.

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president?

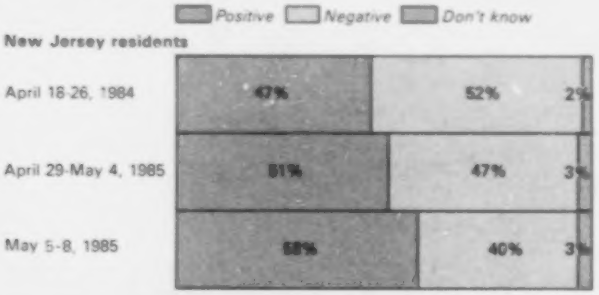
	App.	Dis.
1984		
Jan.	64%	24%
May	63	27
July	64	30
Aug.	67	25
Oct.	65	23
Dec.	65	26
1985		
Mar.	63	28
May	61	32



Note: Sample size = 798 for January 1984; 634 for May 1984; 698 for July 1984; 794 for August 1984; 971 for October 1984; 659 for December 1984; 591 for March 1985; 651 for May 1985.

Source: Surveys by Kenneth D. Bailey Research Associates, Inc./Opinion Research for the Oklahoma Poll, latest that of May 11-16, 1985.

Question: In general, how would you rate the job Ronald Reagan is doing as president—excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

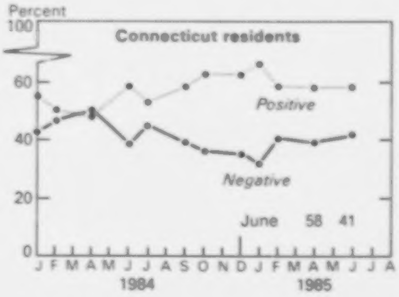


Note: Positive = "Excellent" + "Good"; Negative = "Only fair" + "Poor." Sample size = 804 for April 1984; 421 for April 1985; 567 for May 1985.

Source: Survey by *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton Poll, latest that of April/May 1985.

Question How would you rate the job Ronald Reagan is doing as president? Excellent, good, fair, or poor?

	Pos.	Neg.
1984		
Jan.	56%	42%
Feb.	50	46
Apr.	48	50
June	59	38
July	53	44
Sept.	59	39
Oct.	63	36
Dec.	63	35
1985		
Jan.	66	31
Feb.	59	40
Apr.	58	39



Note: Positive = "Excellent" + "Good"; Negative = "Fair" + "Poor."

Source: Surveys by the Institute for Social Inquiry, University of Connecticut, for the Connecticut Poll, latest that of June 18-24, 1985.

POVERTY IN AMERICA

When the U.S. Census releases figures on poverty later this summer, something will be missing from its statistical portrait. As valuable as that yardstick is, it does not (and cannot) shed any light on how the public views the problem. In these pages, we try to supply that information. I. A. Lewis and William Schneider add to our understanding on earlier pages (pages 2-7) with a veritable gold mine of data from a recent *Los Angeles Times* survey—data that allow us an unprecedented look at attitudes of those who are poor and those who are not.

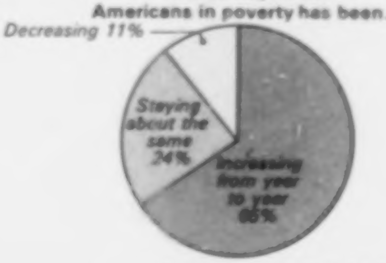
Our review of American attitudes begins with an assessment of public knowledge. Americans are not well informed about poverty. They incorrectly estimate the number of poor people, and they err about the progress of some poverty efforts. Over half believe that spending on poverty has decreased over the last decade. These views can affect what people demand from public policy.

For those policy makers who are wedded to a single view about poverty's causes and cures, the public's assessment will provide little comfort, for the public does not fit into any camp. Perhaps the most striking conclusion from the hundreds of questions we reviewed for this section is that the public is profoundly ambivalent about the causes of poverty and the efforts to mitigate its consequences. People favor action by the federal government on behalf of the poor, they want to spend more, they think the poor have a hard time getting by on what the government gives them. At the same time, they are critical of the poverty efforts, they think they have often failed, and they think poor individuals can and should take more responsibility for themselves (pages 26-27). Thus, the story goes. The public's ambivalence explains in part their contradictory impressions about President Reagan. They give him negative marks for his handling of poverty-related efforts, but they share many of his criticisms of the existing poverty structure.

THE PUBLIC IS CONFUSED, COMPASSIONATE AND FULL OF CONTRADICTIONS

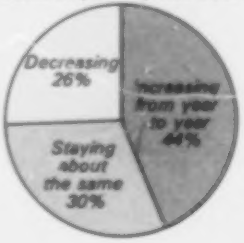
Question: Do you think the percentage of Americans living in poverty has been increasing from year to year, or staying about the same, or do you think the percentage has been decreasing? . . . How about Blacks? . . . How about the elderly? . . .

Percentage of...
Americans in poverty has been...



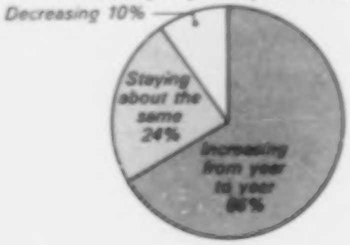
	1959	1969	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Actual poverty rate overall	22%	12%	12%	13%	14%	15%	15%

Blacks in poverty has been...



	1959	1969	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Actual poverty rate of Blacks	55%	32%	31%	33%	34%	36%	36%

Elderly in poverty has been...

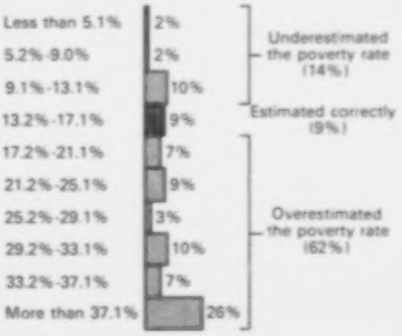


	1959	1969	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Actual poverty rate of those 65 and over	35%	25%	15%	16%	15%	15%	14%

Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985. Actual data from *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1985, p. 454.

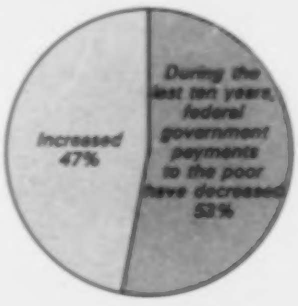
Question: Just your best estimate. What percentage of Americans would you say are living below the poverty line today?

Public's estimate of the percentage of Americans living below the poverty line today



Note: "Not sure" not shown = 14%.

Question: Would you say that the value of federal government payments to the poor have increased or decreased during the last ten years? (Wait for reply) Would you say they have (increased/decreased) greatly or (increased/decreased) somewhat?

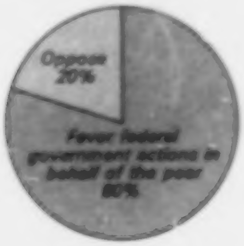


Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

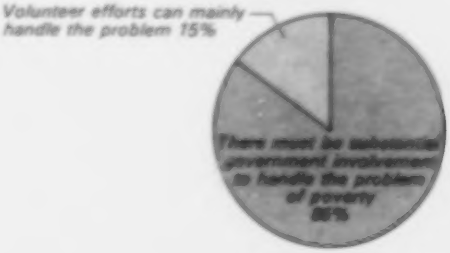
Public Uncertainty about the Poor

ON THE ONE HAND . . .

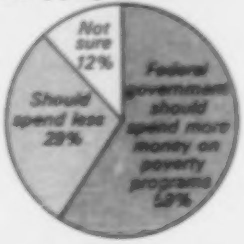
Question: In principle, are you in favor of federal government actions in behalf of the poor, or are you opposed to them? (If in favor or opposed) Is that (in favor/opposed) strongly or (in favor/opposed) somewhat?



Question: Do you think that the problem of poverty in the United States can be handled mainly by volunteer efforts, or do you think that there must be substantial government involvement, as well?

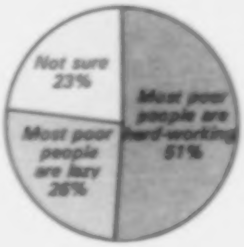


Question: Generally speaking, do you think the federal government should spend a great deal more money on poverty programs, or somewhat more, or somewhat less, or do you think the federal government should spend a great deal less money on poverty programs?

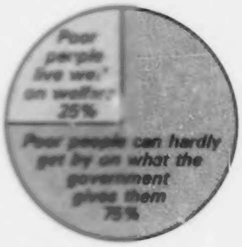


Note: More = "Great deal more," 14% + "Somewhat more," 45%; Less = "Somewhat less," 19% + "Great deal less," 10%.

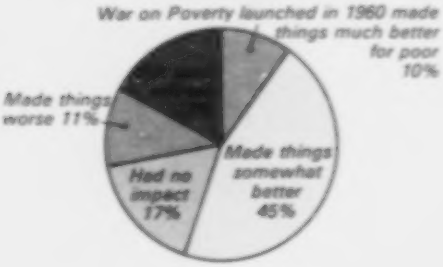
Question: Do you think most poor people are lazy or do you think most poor people are hard-working?



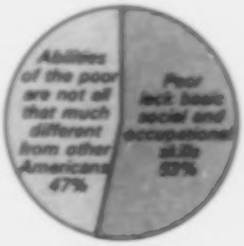
Question: Do you think we're coddling the poor—that poor people live well on welfare—or do you think poor people can hardly get by on what the government gives them?



Question: During the 1960s, under the presidencies of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, the United States government launched a great effort to help the poor people of this nation called "The War on Poverty." Would you say that the war made things much better for the poor, or somewhat better, or had no impact, or do you think the War on Poverty made things worse for the poor?



Question: Do you think poor people lack basic social and occupational skills or do you think their abilities are not all that much different from other Americans?

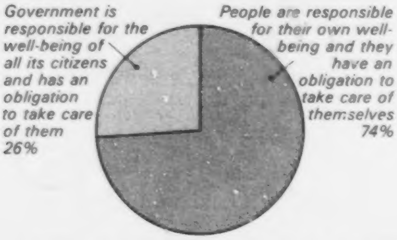


Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

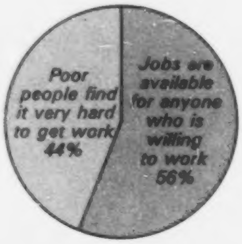
and the Programs that Serve Them

ON THE OTHER HAND

Question: Which statement comes closest to your position: "The government is responsible for the well-being of all its citizens and it has an obligation to take care of them," or "People are responsible for their own well-being and they have an obligation to take care of themselves." (Wait for reply) Do you feel strongly about that, or not?

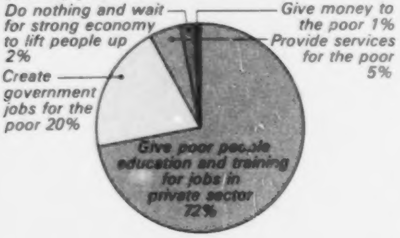


Question: Do you think poor people find it very hard to get work, or do you think there are jobs available for anyone who is willing to work?

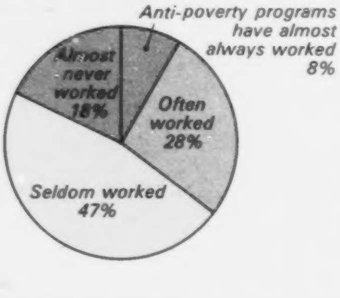


Question: There are only a certain number of things that can be done about the poverty problem. But which is best? We can make poor people less poor by giving them money. Or we can care for poor people by providing services like food and clothing and health care, and so forth. Or we can create government jobs and give them to poor people. Or we can educate people and train them so they can get jobs for themselves in the private sector. Or we can do nothing and wait for a strong economy to lift poor people out of poverty. In your opinion, which one of those is the best thing to do about the poverty problem? I could repeat those if you wish.

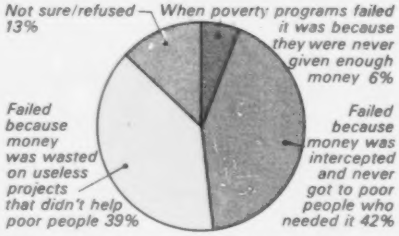
The best thing that can be done about the poverty problem...



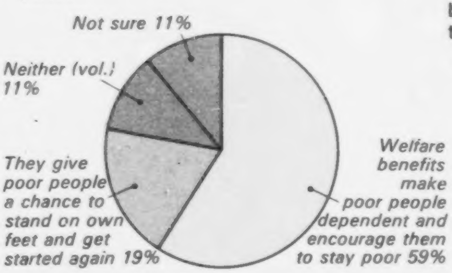
Question: Would you say that anti-poverty programs have almost always worked, or have often worked, or have seldom worked, or would you say that anti-poverty programs have almost never worked?



Question: When poverty programs failed, do you think it was because they were never given enough money to make them work, or because the money was wasted on useless projects that didn't help poor people, or do you think poverty programs failed because the money was intercepted and never got to the poor people who needed it?

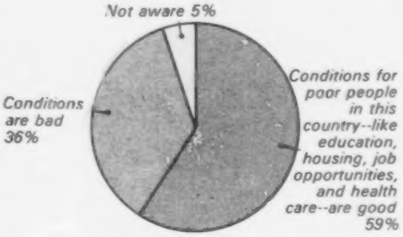


Question: Do you think that welfare benefits give poor people a chance to stand on their own two feet and get started again, or do you think they make poor people dependent and encourage them to stay poor?

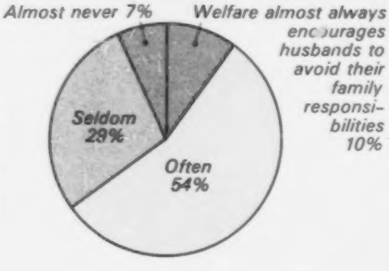


Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

Question: Do you think that conditions for poor people in this country—like education, housing, job opportunities, health care, and so forth—are very good, or fairly good, or fairly bad, or very bad—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say?

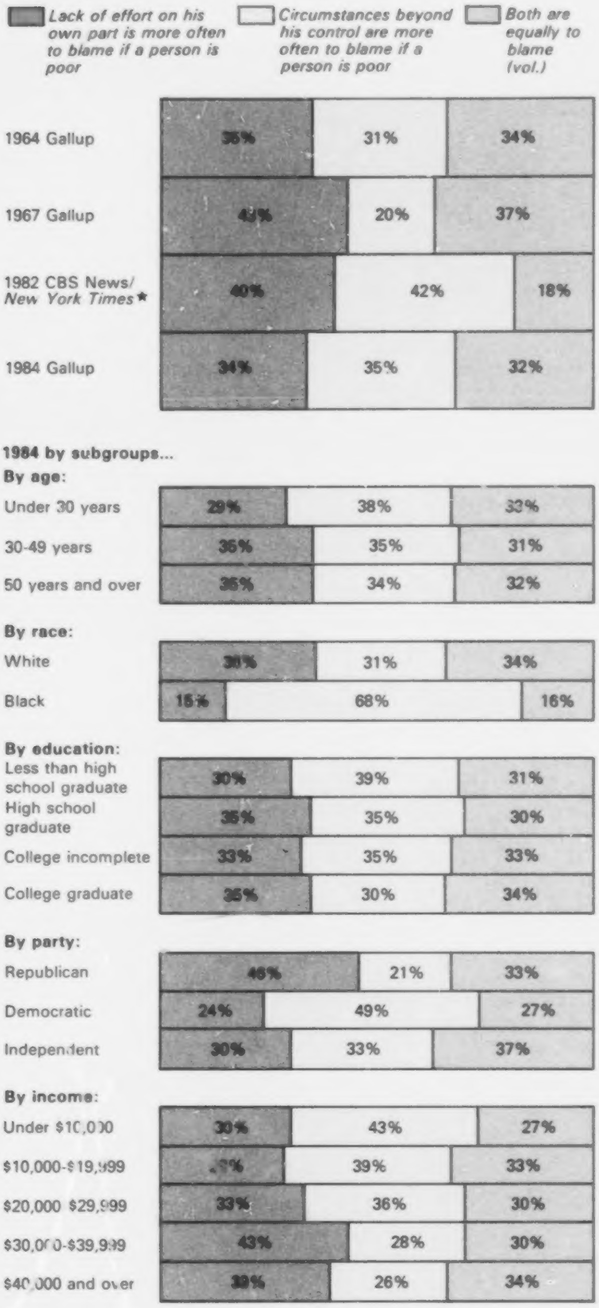


Question: Some people think that welfare encourages husbands to avoid their family responsibilities because it's easier for wives to get aid for their children if the father has left. How often do you think that happens in poor families: almost always, or often, or seldom, or do you think welfare almost never encourages husbands to avoid their family responsibilities?



The Sources of

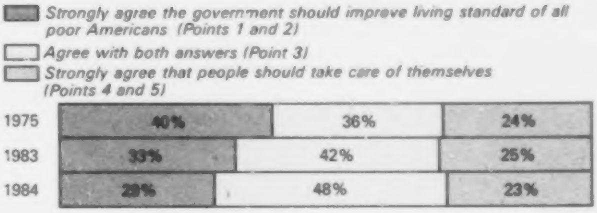
Question: In your opinion, which is more often to blame if a person is poor—lack of effort on his own part, or circumstances beyond his control?



Note: * Question wording for CBS News/*New York Times* varied slightly from Gallup.

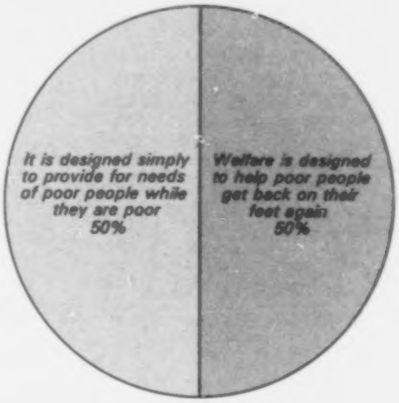
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, March 11-15, 1982; by the Gallup Organization, latest that of December 7-10, 1984.

Question: I'd like to talk with you about issues some people tell us are important. Please look at CARD NN. Some people think that the government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans; they are at point 1 on this card. Other people think it is not the government's responsibility, and that each person should take care of himself; they are at point 5. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you made up your mind on this?



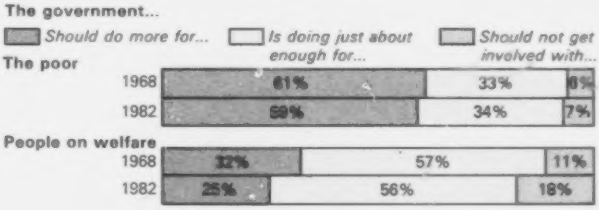
Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, latest that of February-April 1984.

Question: What's the main purpose behind welfare? Is it designed to help poor people get back on their feet again, or is it designed simply to provide for the needs of poor people while they are poor?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

Question: This card lists various groups within the population. For each group described, tell me whether you feel the government should do more than it now does, or whether the government should not get involved, or whether you think the government is doing just about enough.

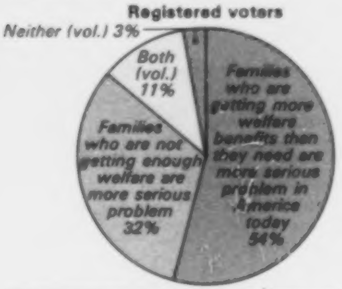


Note: Sample size for 1982 = 1,252.

Source: Surveys by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for the American Council of Life Insurance, latest that of April 24-May 23, 1982.

Public Ambivalence

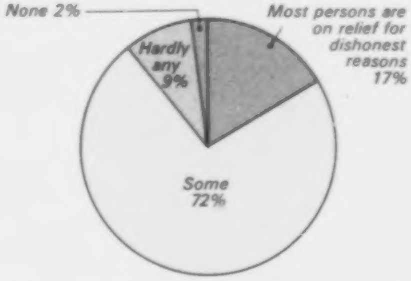
Question: What do you consider a more serious problem in America today—families who are not getting enough welfare benefits to get by, or families getting more welfare benefits than they need?



Note: Sample = 1,135 registered voters.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, September 12-16, 1984.

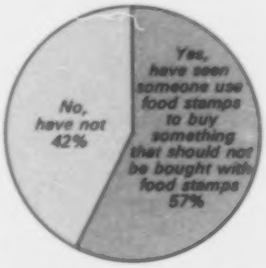
Question: What proportion of persons do you think are on relief for dishonest reasons—most, some, hardly any, or none?



Note: In a survey by the Gallup Organization in 1964 in which an identical question was asked, 8% said most persons were on relief for dishonest reasons, 69% said some, 19% said hardly any, 3% said none (No opinion = 12% calculated out for comparison purposes).

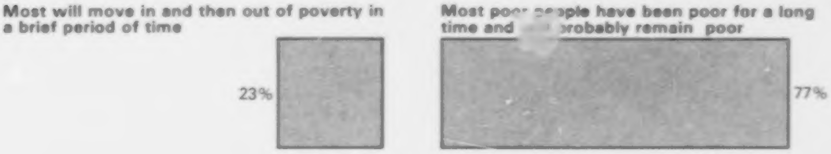
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, March 11-15, 1982.

Question: Have you ever seen someone use food stamps to buy something that you think should not be bought with food stamps?



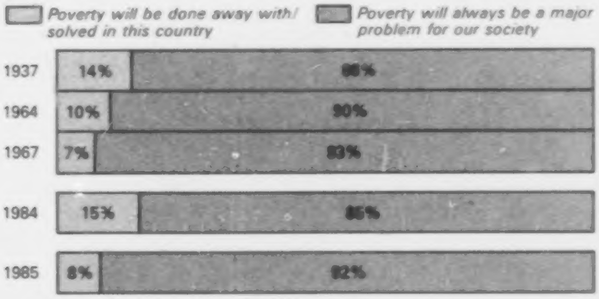
Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 22-30, 1982.

Question: Do you think that most poor people have been poor for a long time and will probably remain that way, or do you think that most poor people move into poverty and then out of it in a relatively brief period of time?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

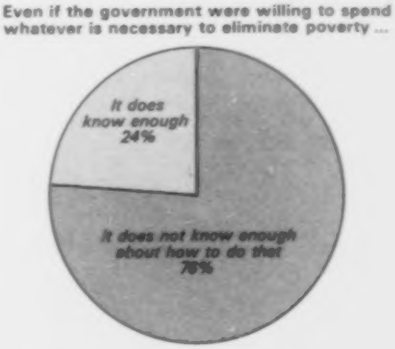
Question: Do you think poverty will ever be done away with in this country? (Gallup 1937, 1964, 1967) Do you think in your lifetime . . . An end to poverty in America . . . will happen or not? (Harris 1984) Do you think poverty in the United States is a problem that will be finally solved, or do you think it will always be a major problem for our society? (*Los Angeles Times* 1985)



Note: Sample size for Harris 1984 survey = 1,255.

Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of May 11-16, 1967; Louis Harris and Associates, November 26-29, 1984; *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

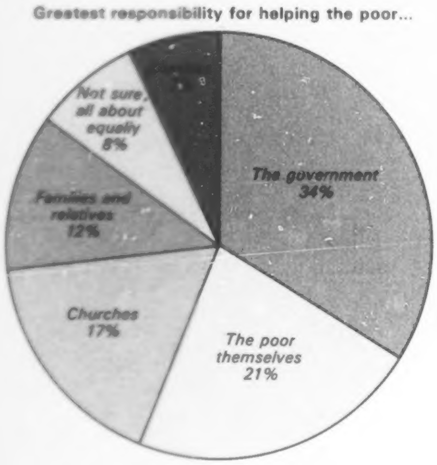
Question: Even if the government were willing to spend whatever is necessary to eliminate poverty in the United States, do you think the government knows enough about how to do that, or not?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

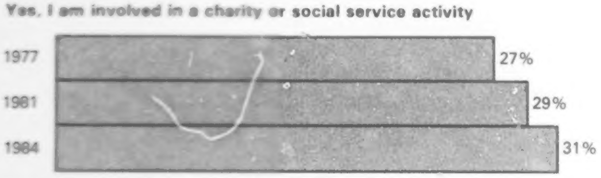
Assessing Government's R

Question: Which of the following do you think have the greatest responsibility for helping the poor: voluntary charities, or churches, or families and relatives, or the government, or the poor themselves, or what?



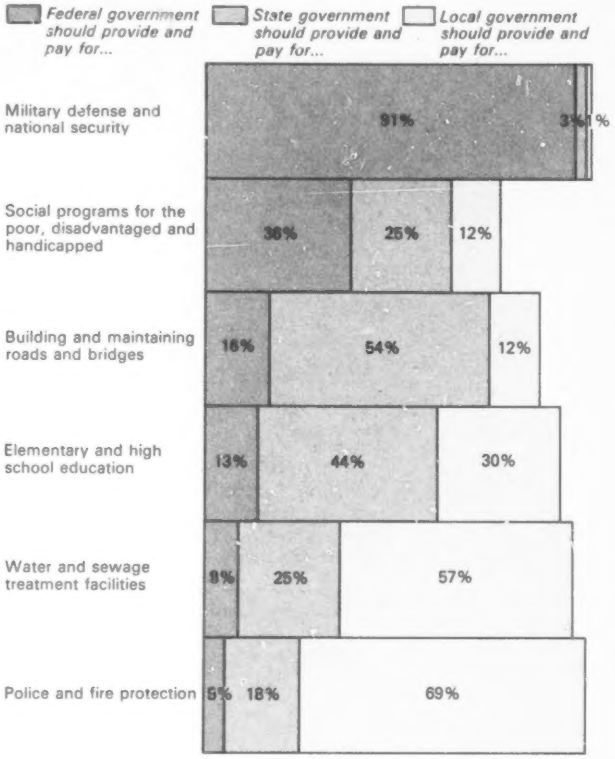
Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

Question: Do you, yourself, happen to be involved in any charity or social service activities, such as helping the poor, the sick, or the elderly?



Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of December 7-10, 1984.

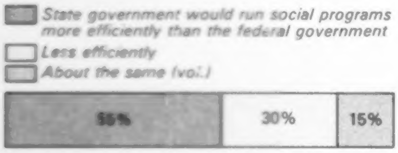
Question: Now, I'm going to read you a list of various essential public services that could be provided and paid for by different levels of government. After I read each one, please tell me whether it should be primarily provided and paid for by the federal, state, or local level of government.



Note: Categories "Combination of categories," "All equally," "Shouldn't be done by government," and "Don't know" not shown.

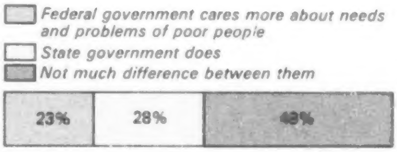
Source: Survey by Cambridge Reports, Inc. for the Public Securities Association, January 27-February 5, 1985.

Question: Suppose states took over some social programs now run by the federal government, such as certain programs to help the poor. Thinking of your state, do you think those programs would be run more efficiently than they are now, less efficiently, or what?



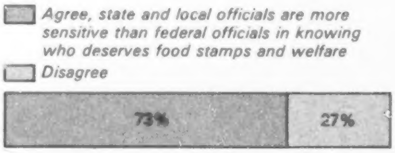
Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 22-30, 1982.

Question: Which cares more about the needs and problems of poor people—the federal government or your state government, or isn't there really that much difference between them?



Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, March 11-15, 1982.

Question: Now let me read you some statements about President Reagan's State of the Union address. For each tell me if you agree or disagree with that statement. . . . State and local officials are more sensitive than federal officials in knowing who deserves food stamps and welfare and who shouldn't get them.

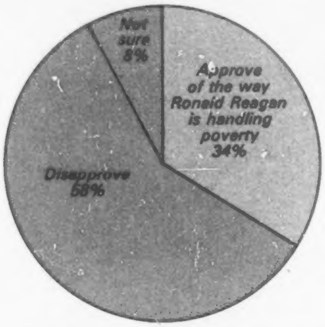


Note: Sample size = 1,251.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, January 27-30, 1982.

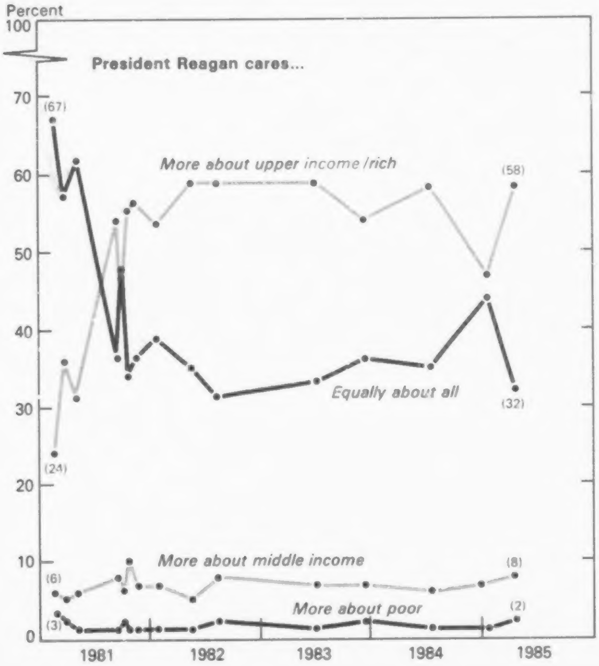
ple... And Ronald Reagan's

Question: How about poverty? Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling poverty? (Wait for reply) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

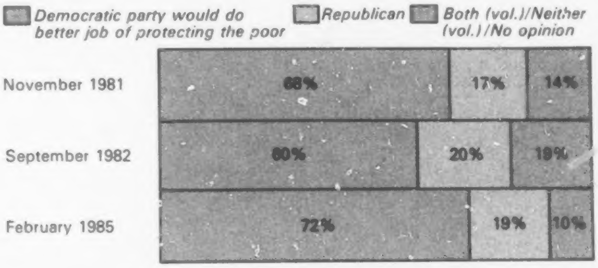
Question: Overall, would you say Reagan cares more about serving poor and lower income people, middle income people, upper income people . . . or would you say he cares equally about serving all people? (ABC News/*Washington Post*) Generally speaking, would you say that President Reagan cares more about poor people, or cares more about middle income people, or cares more about rich people—or would you say that President Reagan cares equally about people from all income groups? (*Los Angeles Times*)



Note: Sample size for February 19-20, 1981 = 1,205; for March 25-29, 1981 = 1,206; for September 25-26, 1981 = 501; for May 24-28, 1982 = 1,018; for August 17, 1982 = 913; for October 1-5, 1981 = 1,004.

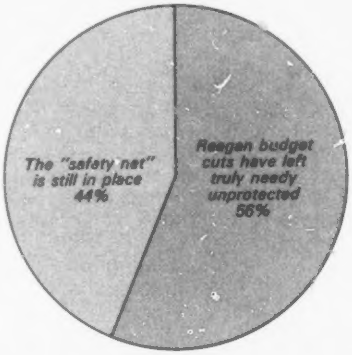
Source: Surveys by ABC News/*Washington Post*, latest that of July 5-8, 1984, and the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24 and April 20-25, 1985.

Question: I am going to mention a few of the problems and issues facing the country. Regardless of how you personally feel about the two parties, I'd like you to tell me which one, the Republican party or the Democratic party, would do a better job of handling each particular problem or issue. . . . Protecting the poor.



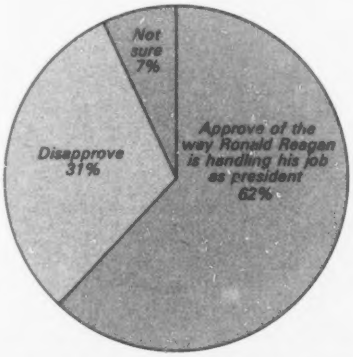
Source: Surveys by ABC News/*Washington Post*, latest that of February 22-26, 1985.

Question: Do you think the Reagan budget cuts have left the truly needy unprotected, or do you think the "safety net" is still in place for these people?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

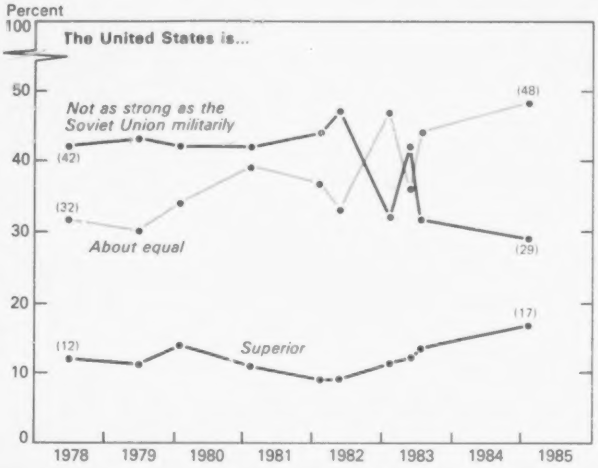
Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president? (Wait for reply) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, April 20-25, 1985.

THE AMERICAN

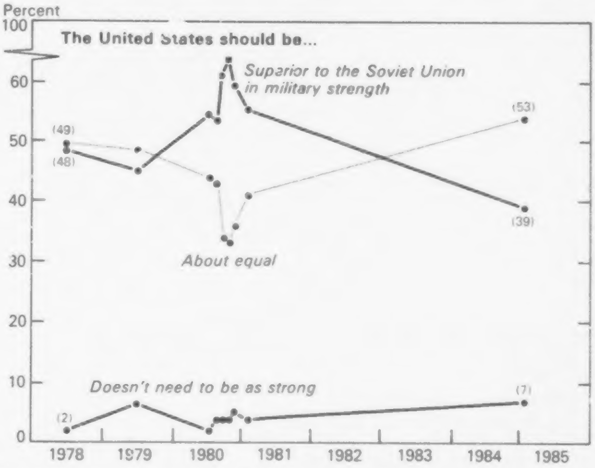
Question: Right now, would you say the United States is superior in military strength to the Soviet Union, or is it about equal in strength, or is it not as strong as the Soviet Union?



Note: Sample size = 1,422 for June 1979; 1,468 for January 1980; 1,433 for June 1981; 1,470 for May 1982; 1,489 for April 1983; 1,145 for June 1983. "No opinion" not shown.

Source: Surveys by CBS News/*New York Times*, latest that of January 2-4, 1985; *New York Times*, June 13-18, 1983.

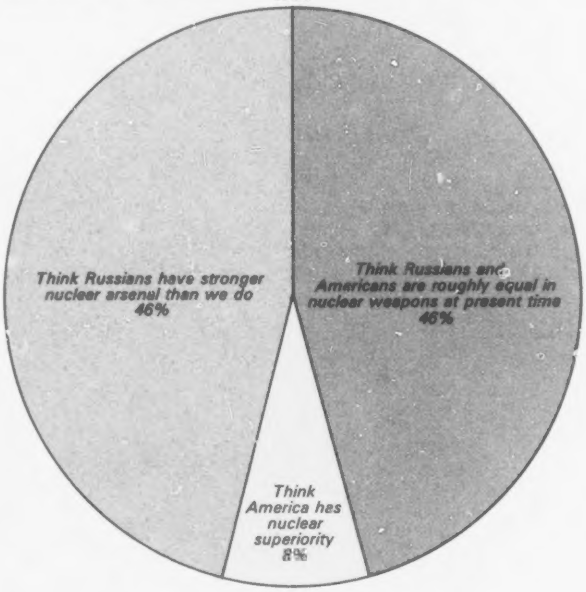
Question: Do you think the military strength of the United States should be superior to the Soviet Union, should be about equal in strength, or doesn't the United States need to be (exactly) as strong as the Soviet Union?



Note: Sample size = 1,422 for June 1979; 1,417 registered voters for September 10-14, 1980; 817 registered voters for September 19-21, 1980; 810 registered voters for September 23-25, 1980. October 1980 results were based on probable electorate.

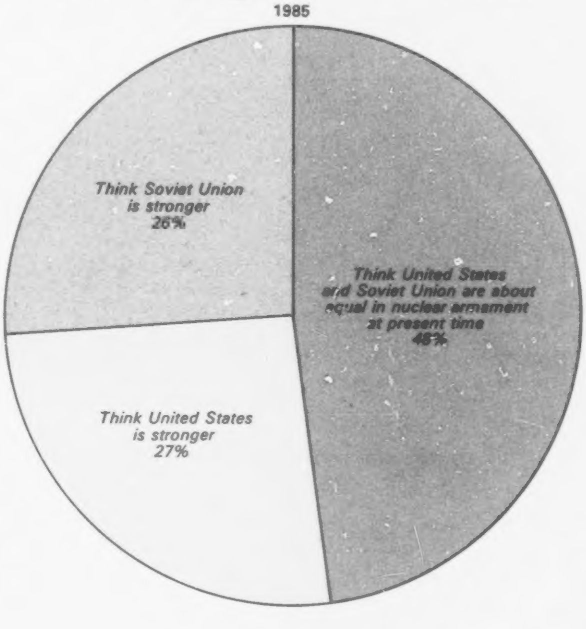
Source: Surveys by CBS News/*New York Times*, latest that of January 2-4, 1985.

Question: At the present time, do you think the Russians have a stronger nuclear arsenal than we do, or do you think that America has nuclear superiority over Russia, or do you think the Russians and the Americans are roughly equal in nuclear weapons at the present time.



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, March 14-17, 1982.

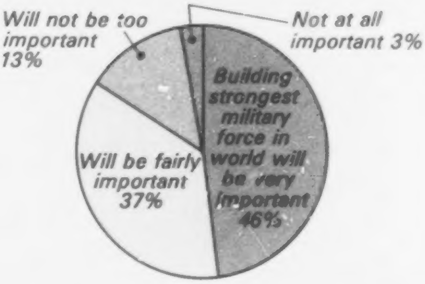
Question: Now, here are some questions on another topic. At the present time, which nation do you feel is stronger in terms of nuclear weapons, the United States or the Soviet Union—or do you think they are about equal in nuclear armament?



Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, January 19-24, 1985.

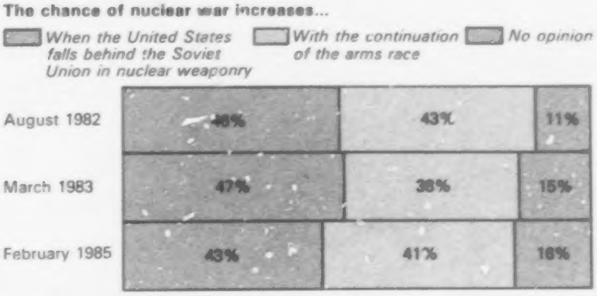
MOOD ON DEFENSE

Question: In determining America's strength in the future, say, 25 years from now, how important do you feel each of the following factors will be—very important, fairly important, not too important, or not at all important? Building the strongest military force in the world.



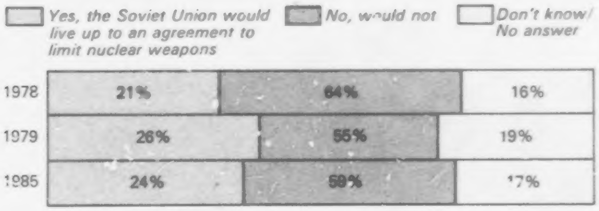
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, May 18-21, 1984.

Question: In your opinion, which of the following increases the chances of nuclear war more—a continuation of the nuclear arms buildup here and in the Soviet Union, or the U.S. falling behind the Soviet Union in nuclear weaponry?



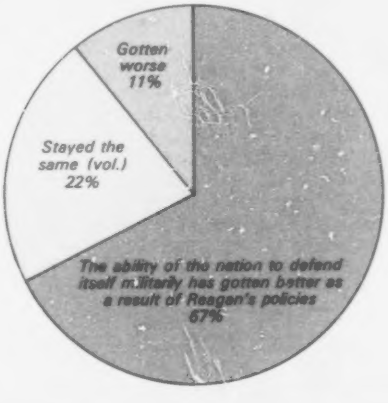
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for the *Wall Street Journal*, August 1982, and the Gallup Organization, latest that of February 15-18, 1985.

Question: If the United States and the Soviet Union were to sign an agreement to limit nuclear weapons, do you think the Soviet Union would live up to its share of the agreement?



Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, latest that of January 2-4, 1985.

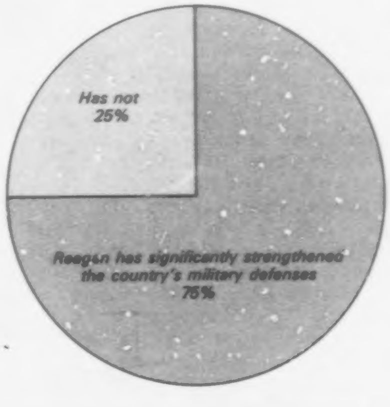
Question: I am going to read off some foreign and domestic problems that the Reagan administration has been faced with since taking office. As I read off each problem, one at a time, would you tell me whether it has gotten much better, somewhat better, somewhat worse, or much worse as a result of the Reagan policies? . . . The ability of the nation to defend itself militarily.



Note. A 1982 asking of the same question found those saying "Better" = 58%, "Worse" = 14%, "Same" (vol.) = 28%.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, February 15-18, 1985.

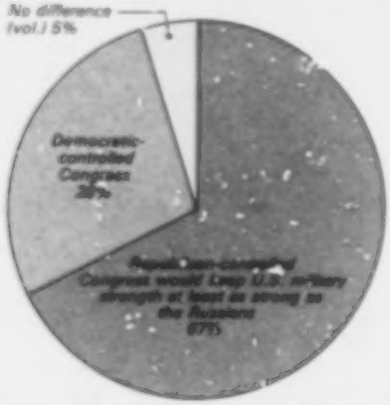
Question: Do you think Ronald Reagan has significantly strengthened the country's military defenses, or hasn't he?



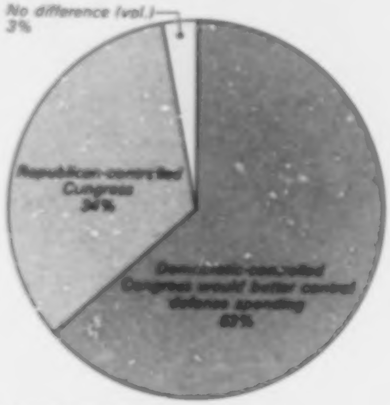
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, January 14-17, 1985.

STRENGTH VERSUS SPENDING

Question: Now if you had to choose, which do you feel . . . would keep the military strength of the U.S. at least as strong as the Russians . . . a Republican- or Democratic-controlled Congress?



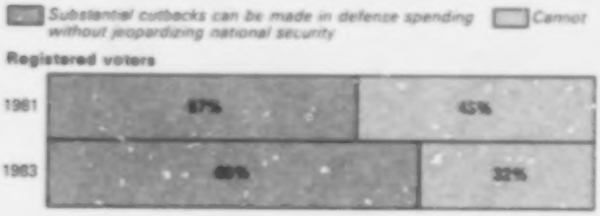
Question: Now if you had to choose, which do you feel . . . would better control defense spending . . . a Republican- or Democratic-controlled Congress?



Note: Sample size = 1,254.

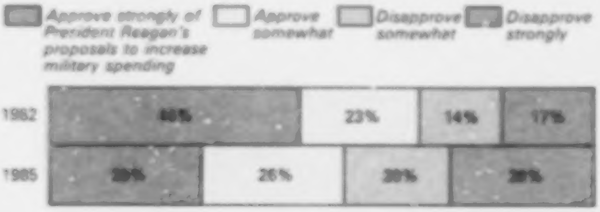
Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, April 1-3, 1985.

Question: Do you feel that we can make substantial cutbacks in defense spending without jeopardizing our national security?



Source: Surveys by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for *Time*, latest that of March 1-3, 1983.

Question: Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of President Reagan's proposals to increase military spending? Do you feel strongly about that, or not so strongly?*



Note: * Question wording varied slightly.

Source: Surveys by the *Los Angeles Times*, latest that of January 19-24, 1985.

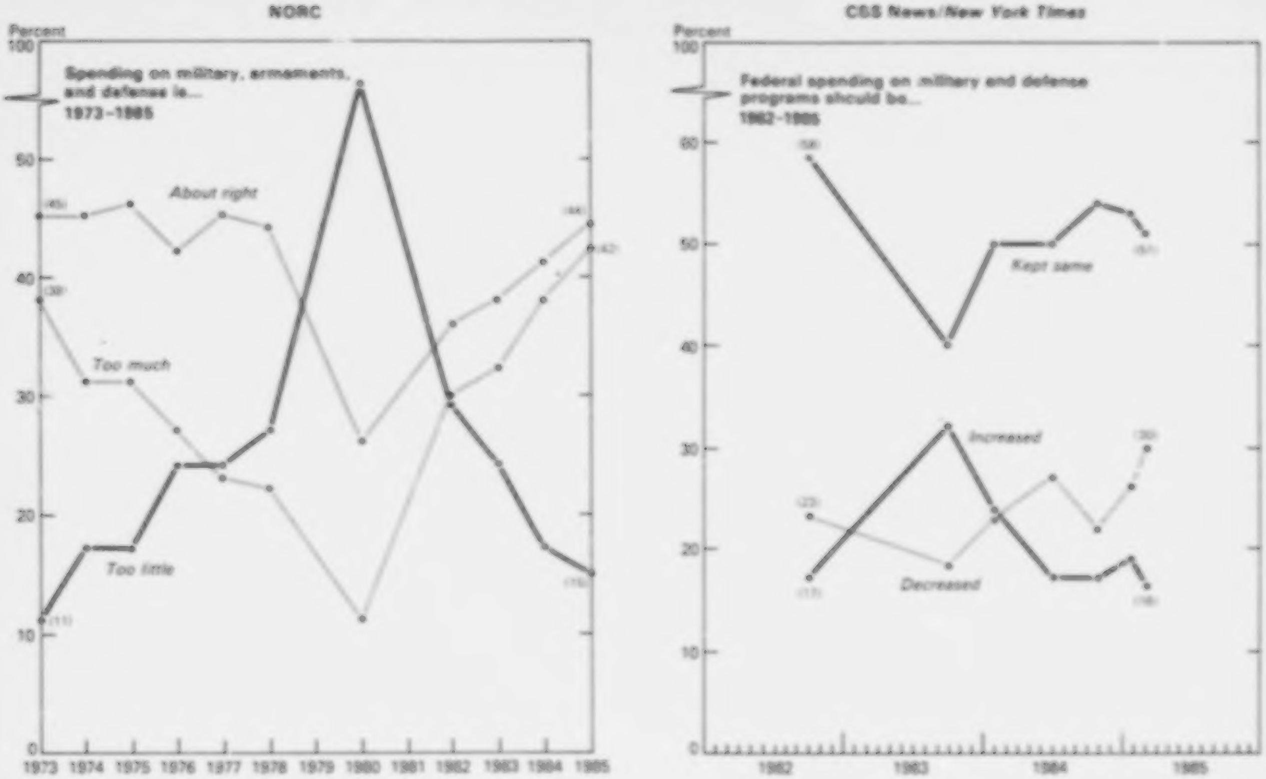
Question wording for charts on page 35.

Question: Do you think U.S. government spending should be increased, decreased, or remain about the same on the following? . . . National defense. (Gallup, 1950) Do you think the government should spend more money or less money for defense purposes? (Gallup, 1952) There is much discussion as to the amount this country should spend for national defense. How do you feel about this—do you think we are spending too little, too much, or about the right amount? (Gallup, 1960) There is much discussion as to the amount of money the government in Washington should spend for national defense and military purposes. How do you feel about this? Do you think we are spending too little, too much, or about the right amount? (Gallup, 1969-1976, Dec. 1979-Jan. 1980, Jan. 1981-Mar. 1982, Nov. 1982-Jan. 1985) Here are some of the things the federal government spends money on. For each one, would you please tell me whether you think the government should be spending more money than it is now, less money than it is now, or should the government continue spending about the same amount as now? . . . Defense. (Gallup, Aug. 1980) I am going to read a list of present federal government programs. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you feel it should be expanded, cut back or kept about the same. . . . Defense spending. (Gallup, 1976, Oct.-Nov. 1982) Turning now to the business of the country—we are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. . . . The military. (Roper) We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. First, the military, armaments, and defense. (NORC) In general, do you favor increasing or decreasing, the present defense budget, or keeping it the same as it is now? (Harris) Should federal spending on military and defense programs be increased, be decreased, or kept about the same? (CBS News/*New York Times*) Do you think the government should cut spending on the military to reduce the budget deficit, or not? (ABC News/*Washington Post*)

Note: "Don't know," "Don't know/No answer," "Not sure," "No opinion" not shown.

Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of January 1985; the Roper Organization latest that of December 1-8, 1984; National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, latest that of February-April 1985; Louis Harris and Associates, latest that of December 27-January 2, 1985; CBS News/*New York Times*, latest that of February 23-27, 1985; ABC News/*Washington Post*, latest that of September 7-11, 1984.

SPENDING ENOUGH



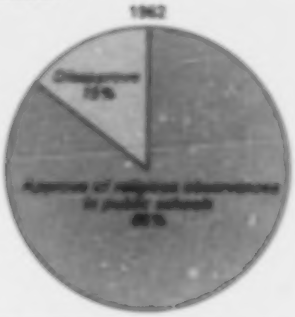
For question wording, see page 34.

	1950	1952	1960	1969	1971	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980		1981	1982			1983			1984			1985	
Gallup	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Expanded/Increased/ More/Too little	64	29	21	8	11	13			22		32	34	49	58	51	19	24	16	14	21					11	
Cut back/Decreased/ Less/Too much	7	26	18	52	50	46			36		16	22	14	11	15	36	34	41	45	37					46	
Kept same/About right	24	25	45	31	31	30			32		45	33	24	25	22	36	36	31	33	36					36	
Roper																										
Too little						14	13	20	22	23	31	41	56		29		19			21			14			
Too much						32	32	27	22	24	23	16	12		27		38			32			37			
About right						40	42	41	44	40	35	35	24		38		37			40			43			
NORC																										
Too little						11	17	17	24	24	27		56				29			24			17		15	
Too much						38	31	31	27	23	22		11				30			32			38		42	
About right						45	45	46	42	45	44		26				36			38			41		44	
Harris																										
Increase					10														22	36	28				9	
Decrease					44														33	15	20				38	
Keep it as now					36														42	47	47				50	
CBS News/*New York Times*																										
Increase																	17			32		24	17	17	19	16
Decrease																	23			18		23	27	22	26	30
Keep about same																	58			40		50	50	54	53	51
ABC News/*Washington Post*																										
Should not cut																53		54		37			49	46		
Should cut																41		43		59			48	52		

SCHOOL PRAYER:

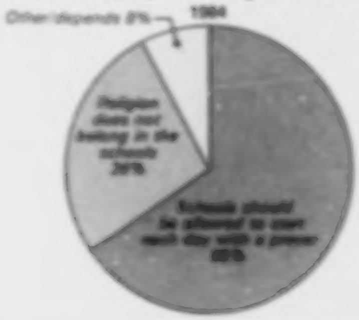
PRAYER IN SCHOOLS HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of religious observances in public schools?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, July 26-31, 1962.

Question: Which do you think—schools should be allowed to start each day with a prayer, or religion does not belong in the schools?

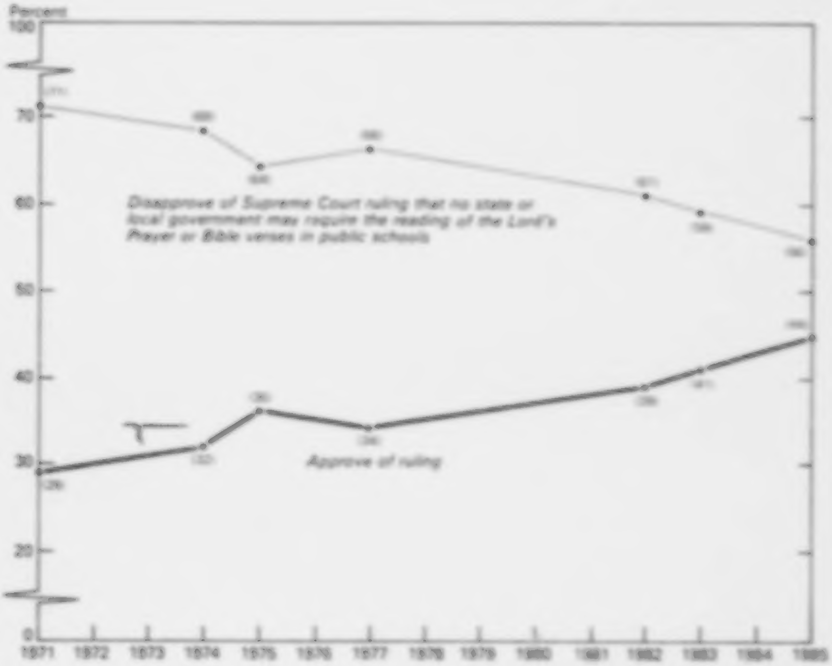


Note: Based on those who said they were interested enough in the issue of school prayer to favor either allowing schools to start each day with a prayer or feeling that religion does not belong in the schools = 82% in a previous question.

Source: Survey by the Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan (American National Election Study), November 7, 1984-January 7, 1985.

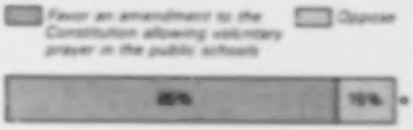
Question: On another topic . . . the United States Supreme Court has ruled that no state of local government may require the reading of the Lord's Prayer or Bible verses in public schools. What are your views on this—do you approve or disapprove of this? (Gallup)

The United States Supreme Court has ruled that no state or local government may require the reading of the Lord's Prayer or Bible verses in public schools. What are your views on this—do you approve or disapprove of the Court ruling? (NORC)



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, October 8-11, 1971; surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, latest that of February-April 1985.

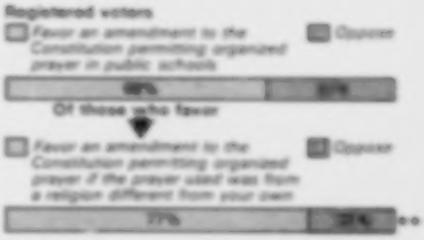
Question: Have you heard or read about a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would allow voluntary prayer in the public schools? (If yes . . .) Do you favor or oppose this amendment?



Note: *Based on those who had heard or read about the amendment = 62%.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, July 22-25, 1983.

Question: Would you favor or oppose an amendment to the Constitution that would permit organized prayers to be said in the public schools? (If favor) Would you favor or oppose organized prayer in the public schools if the prayer used was from a religion different from your own?



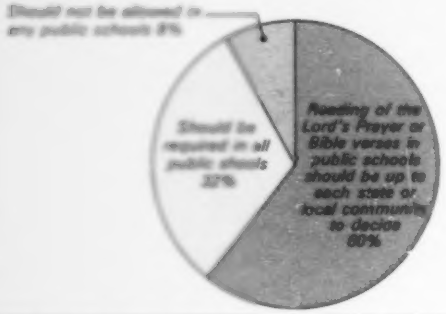
Note: **Of those who favored an amendment to the Constitution permitting organized prayer in public schools = 68% in a previous question.

Source: Survey by CBS News/New York Times, September 12-16, 1984.

SUBSTANTIAL PUBLIC SUPPORT

LET STATE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES DECIDE

Question: What are your views on the reading of the Lord's Prayer or Bible verses in public schools? Do you think it should be required in all public schools, *not allowed* in any public schools, or that it should be up to each state or local community to decide?

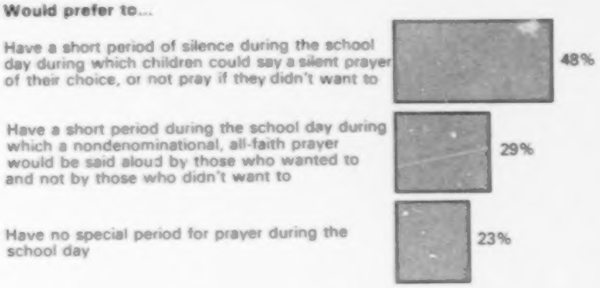


Note: Asked of half the sample.

Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, February-April 1974.

UNHEARD PREFERRED

Question: President Reagan has proposed having prayers in public schools. Here are three different positions on prayers in schools. (Card shown respondent) Which one would you most like to see done? . . .

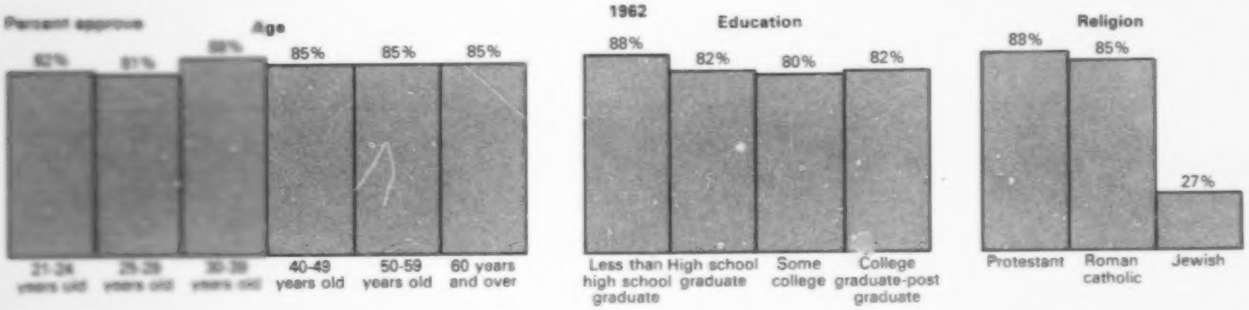


Note: Of those choosing one of the above, 53% felt very strongly, 34% felt fairly strongly, and 13% felt not very strongly about their choice.

Source: Survey by the Roper Organization, (Roper Report 82-6), June 5-12, 1982.

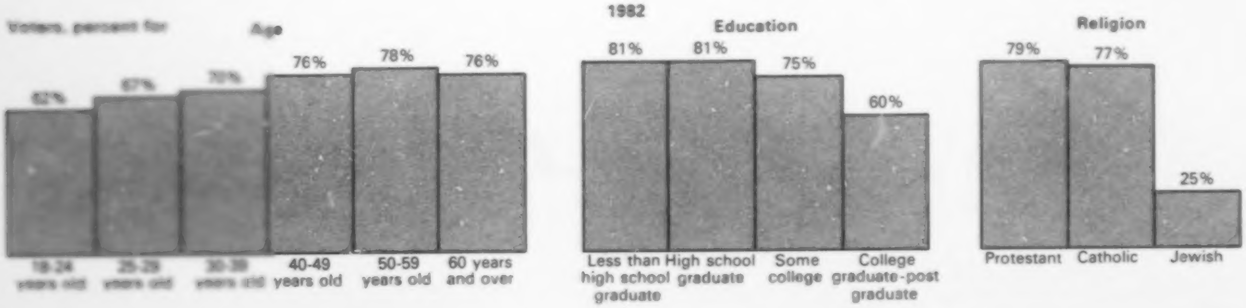
SUPPORT DECLINES AMONG THE YOUNG AND COLLEGE EDUCATED

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of religious observances in public schools?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, July 26-31, 1962.

Question: After each item on the list below, please indicate in the appropriate box whether you personally are basically for or basically against this item. . . . Public school prayer.

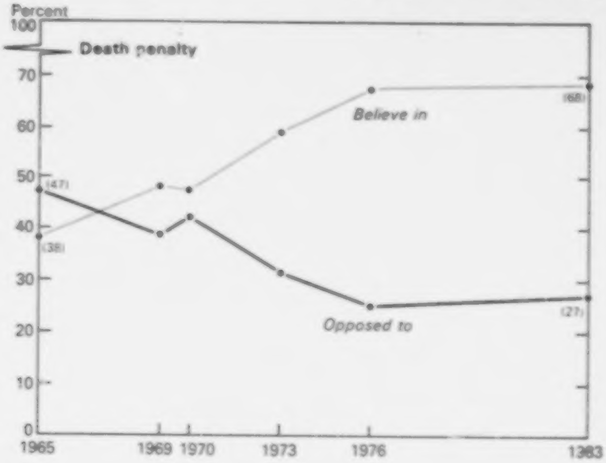


Note: Voters as they left voting booths. "Other religion" and "No religion" not shown. 73% of those who said "Other religion" were for the amendment and 27% were against it. "No religion" was 29% and 71% respectively.

Source: Survey by ABC News, November 2, 1982.

THE DEATH

Question: Do you believe in capital punishment (death penalty) or are you opposed to it?

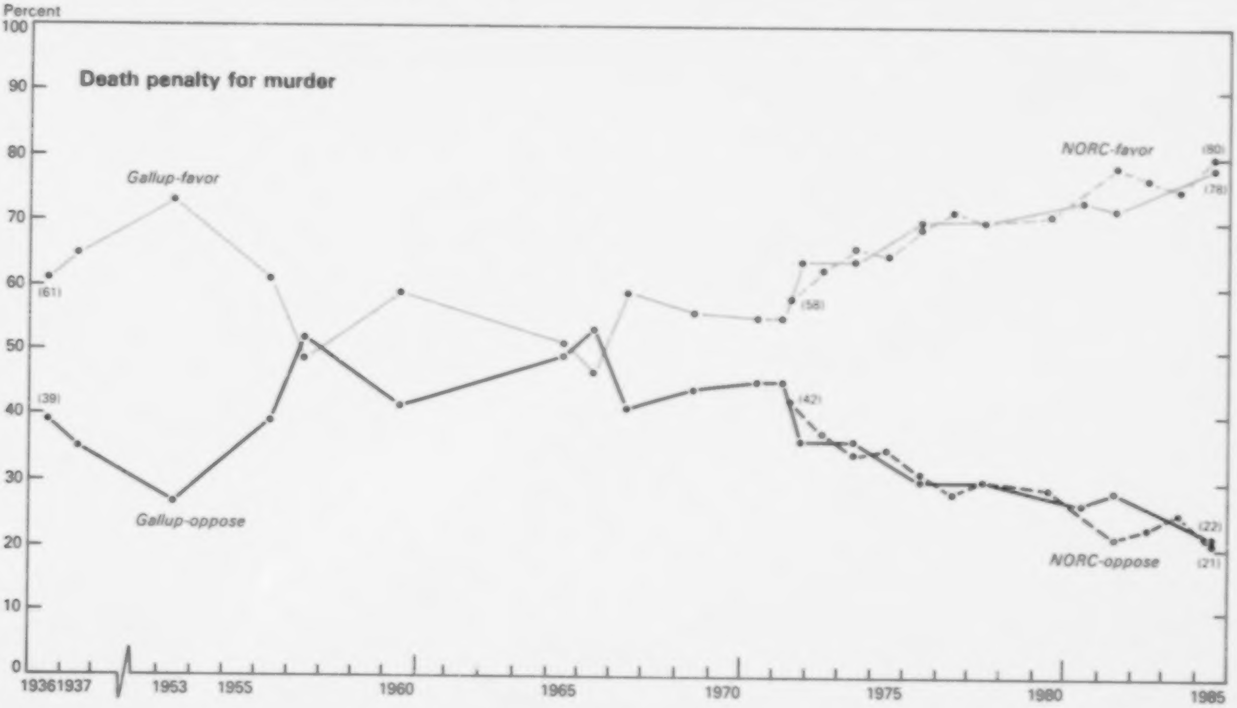


Note: "Not sure" not shown.

Source: Surveys by Louis Harris and Associates, latest that of January 2-5, 1983.

Question: *Gallup* Do you believe in the death penalty for murder? (1936) Do you favor or oppose capital punishment for murder? (1937) Are you in favor of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder? (1953, 1956, 1960-72, 1976-81, 1985) Do you favor the death penalty for murder? (1957) Suppose that on Election Day . . . you could vote on key issues as well as candidates. Please tell me how you would vote on each of these propositions: I favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder. I oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder. (1974, 1982)

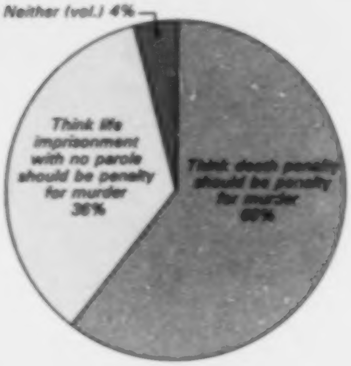
NORC Are you in favor of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder? (1972 and 1973) Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder? (1974-1984)



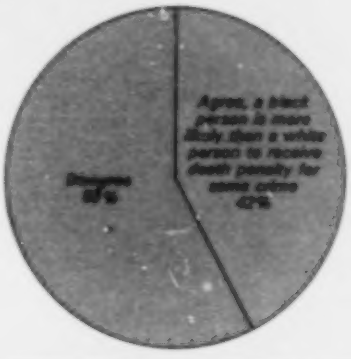
Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of January 11-14, 1985 and National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, latest that of February-April 1985.

PENALTY CONSIDERED

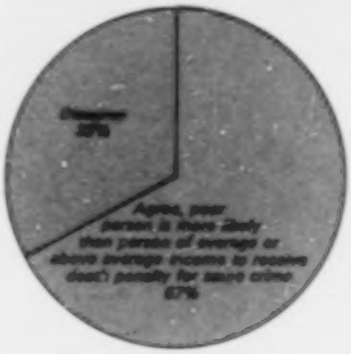
Question: What do you think should be the penalty for murder—the death penalty or life imprisonment, with absolutely no possibility of parole?



Question: As I read off each of these statements would you tell me whether you agree or disagree with it. . . . A black person is more likely than a white person to receive the death penalty for the same crime.

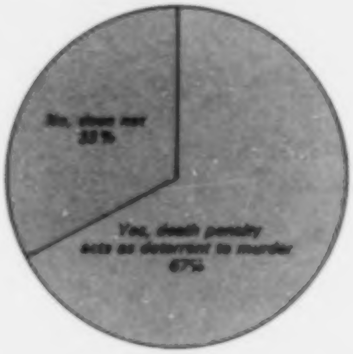


Question: As I read off each of these statements would you tell me whether you agree or disagree with it. . . . A poor person is more likely than a person of average or above average income to receive the death penalty for the same crime.



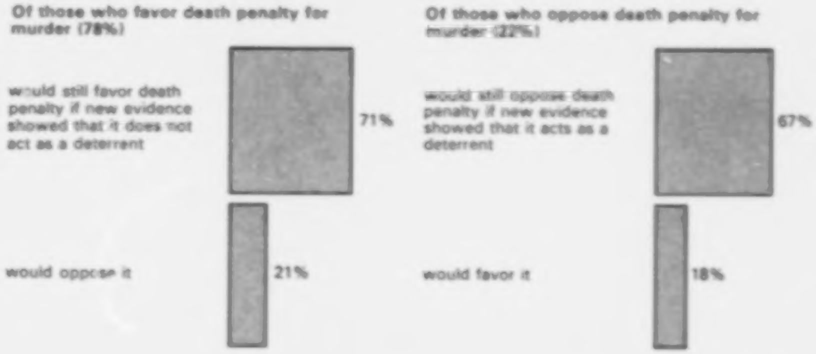
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, January 11-14, 1985.

Question: Do you feel that the death penalty acts as a deterrent to the commitment of murder—that it lowers the murder rate —or not?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, January 11-14, 1985.

Question: Suppose new evidence showed that the death penalty (acts/does not act) as a deterrent to murder—that it (lowers/does not lower) the murder rate. Would you favor or oppose the death penalty (for murder)?

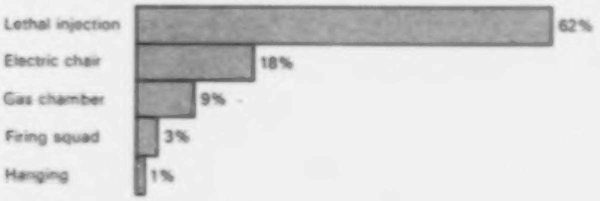

Of those who favor death penalty for murder (78%)

Of those who oppose death penalty for murder (22%)

Note: "Don't know" not shown. It was 8% and 15% respectively.
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, January 11-14, 1985.

Question: Apart from your own opinion about the death penalty, what form of punishment do you consider to be the most humane —the electric chair, the gas chamber, lethal injection, firing squad, or hanging?

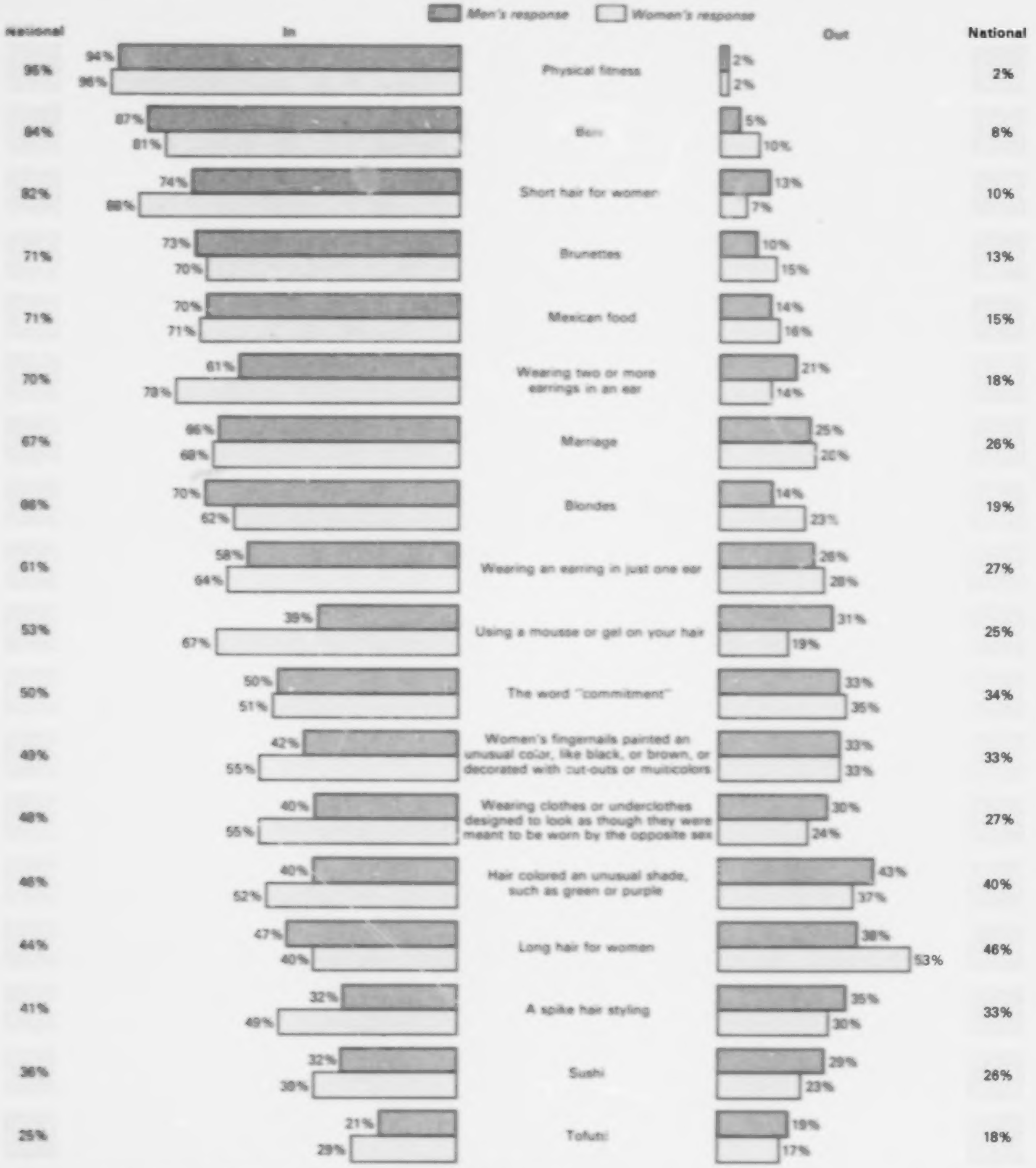
Most humane form of capital punishment



Note: "None" (vol.) not shown = 8%.
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, January 11-14, 1985.

What's In, What's Out

Question: We often hear of "in" things, meaning what's highly fashionable at the moment, and "out" things, meaning what's no longer highly fashionable. Here is a list of a number of different things. (CARD SHOWN RESPONDENT) Would you read down that list, and whether you personally like it or not, for each one tell me whether you think it is currently "in" or "out?"



Note: "Don't know" not shown.

Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-10), October 27-November 3, 1984.

by George C. Edwards

Comparing Chief Executives

Midway through the fifth year of his presidency, Ronald Reagan seems to have captured the hearts of his countrymen. He continues to stand high in the polls, despite a series of events that were expected to damage his image. Reagan has had a Gallup approval rating above 50 percent for 27 months, an impressive performance for a Republican—and a conservative one to boot. The president's ability to deflect criticism and project a favorable image is often described as the Reagan phenomenon.

But are Reagan's relations with the American people exceptional? Were his first-term approval levels unusually high? Did he develop new bases of support for himself and for the Republican party? Is there a broad consensus behind him, or has he polarized rather than united the public?

Everett Ladd describes a picture of stability in presidential ratings over the last two years (see page 20). He criticizes those commentators who fail to convey this steadiness, concentrating instead on minor fluctuations produced by events. A review of seventy-nine Gallup polls taken during Reagan's first term helps round out this portrait of the Reagan presidency, and provides some surprises for students of the Reagan phenomenon.

A Strong Finish

When President Reagan took office, his poll ratings were relatively low—51 percent. But by May of 1981, after the attempt on his life, he had climbed 17 percentage points to the highest approval rating of his first term (68 percent). By November he was down to 49 percent, below his initial ratings. He remained in the 40 percent range throughout 1982, bottoming out at 35 percent in January 1983. Since then his ratings have improved, and he has enjoyed majority approval for over two years.

President Reagan's average rating was 50 percent for his first four years in office. This is impressive, but by no means extraordinary. Eisenhower averaged 70 percent, Johnson 51 percent, Nixon 56 percent, and Carter 46 percent for their first four-year terms. So, of our last five full-term presidents, Reagan's first-term popularity was slightly below average.

Table 1

AVERAGE FIRST-TERM APPROVAL FOR RONALD REAGAN BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

Group	Approval
Protestant	52%
Catholic	50
Under 30	50
30-49	51
Over 50	49
North	47
Midwest	51
South	51
West	53
Grade School	36
High School	49
College	58
Union	44
Nonunion	52
White	55
Nonwhite	17
Male	54
Female	46

Nevertheless, the president ended his term with a strong showing in the polls. In the past three decades, only Eisenhower and Nixon, and now Reagan, have completed their first terms at or above their initial ratings. Reagan sank as expected early in his term, but managed to overcome what we've come to believe is that inexorable decline.

Ecumenical Appeal

Reagan—like Eisenhower, Nixon, and Ford—managed to appeal fairly uniformly to Catholics as well as Protestants; to the young, middle-aged, and elderly; and to those in all four regions of the country. His vocal social conservatism and anti-communism seem not to have altered the basic contour of Republican presidential approval among these groups. There were noticeable differences in approval among groups with varying levels of education and between union and nonunion households. These were consistent with results under previous Republican presidents.

In two categories, race and gender, the difference in approval levels between groups was unprecedented. The 38 percentage point chasm between whites and nonwhites was larger than ever measured in Gallup poll data. Extreme racial polarization cannot be claimed to be inherent in Republican presidencies, though, since the gap under both Eisenhower and Ford was far smaller. Reagan's first four years also produced the much-touted 8 percentage point average difference in approval between men and women. Only Nixon before him had suffered anything but a negligible gap—and that only occasionally.

Starting Points

Attempts to explain fluctuations in presidential approval usually focus on short-run changes in conditions, such as inflation and unemployment. This too often overlooks other explanations.

Two features of public opinion may predispose people to approve of a president early in his term. The first is Americans' bias toward the positive; they have a tendency to look for and expect positive relationships. This bias seems to have the greatest influence in ambiguous situations, where things are unfamiliar or untested. They tend toward giving the benefit of the doubt, and a newly elected president, for example, would be the beneficiary.

Another factor may affect a president's approval early in his term. Americans have little basis on which to evaluate a fledgling president, and so they may turn to others for cues. What they find in the press is the traditional presidential honeymoon. Then they look around them and are confronted with the excitement and symbolism inherent in the peaceful transfer of power.

One way to identify the impact of these factors is to compare the electoral percentages by which recent presidents first won election with their approval in the first Gallup poll taken after the election. With one exception, a substantially larger percentage of people were willing to approve of new presidents at the beginning of their terms than were willing to vote for them two months earlier. Favoring another candidate, apparently, is different from being opposed to the person who wins the election. The exception to this pattern was Ronald Reagan in his first term. He benefited not at all from the normal honeymoon. His initial approval rating was exactly the same as his percentage of the presidential vote. Thirty-six percent of Americans withheld judgment. A CBS News/*New York Times* poll at the time found that 43 percent had neither a favorable nor an unfavorable impression of the president. This was surprising, since Ronald Reagan was one of the best known people in the country, having run for the Republican nomination three times, and having finished a year-long election campaign.

Partisan Support

Ronald Reagan's average support among Republicans during his first four years was 83 percent. It rose as high as 94 percent and never fell below 67 percent. The figures were dramatically different for Democrats, however. Their average approval was only 29 percent, with a high of 52 percent and a low of just 17 percent. Independents fell between the partisans—at 52 percent. What is most interesting about these figures is the difference between his support from the two parties and that of his predecessors. Between 1953 and 1980, the absolute difference in presidential approval levels between Democrats and Republicans was 35 percentage points, itself a substantial figure. Independents fell in between, averaging 17 percentage points difference from the Democrats and 18 percentage points from the Republicans. During Reagan's tenure, however, the average gap between Democrats and Republicans widened to 54 percentage points. Independents, still in the middle, approved of the president by 31 percentage points less than Republicans and 23 points more than Democrats.

Table 2

COMPARISON OF ELECTORAL PERCENTAGES AND POSTINAUGURAL APPROVAL

	% of Popular Vote in First Election	% Approval in First Post-inaugural Poll
Eisenhower	55%	69%
Kennedy	50	72
Johnson	61	71
Nixon	43	60
Carter	50	66
Reagan	51	51

The partisan gap was not the result of abnormally high levels of approval among Republicans. In fact, Reagan had lower approval levels among Republicans than Eisenhower in either of his terms, or than Nixon in his first term. Only in the Watergate-marred period have Republican presidents received lower average approval from their party identifiers. The real cause of the sizable difference in partisan approval is the low approval level (29 percent) among Democrats. Even Richard Nixon got 42 percent from the opposition in his first term.

In the past, it has been Republicans rather than Democrats who have tended to give opposition-party presidents very low approval levels, especially in 1967-1968 and in 1978-1980. Yet, in these years Democrats as well awarded the president low approval levels, never averaging as much as 60 percent for a given year. Thus, the members of both parties gave Johnson and Carter low support. In Reagan's case, there was a clear bifurcation of evaluations that reflected, but also exaggerated, the underlying partisan loyalties of the public.

Table 3

REAGAN FAVORABILITY RATINGS

Opinion of Reagan	Jan. 1980	Aug. 1980	Nov. 1980	Jan. 1981
Favorable	42%	46%	41%	46%
Unfavorable	38	27	21	11
No opinion	20	27	38	43

Source: Surveys by CBS News/*New York Times*, latest that of February 2, 1981.

Reagan, the Least Well-Liked

Numerous polls have shown that many people oppose Reagan's policies, but like him personally. People compartmentalize their attitudes toward this president. Although his charm may buttress his approval ratings, by itself it cannot determine them. Over the years Gallup has asked the American people to rate presidents favorably or unfavorably, a measure separate from their approval of the job he's doing. The polls have been irregular at times, but it is nonetheless surprising that, when we compare the average personal ratings of presidents we find Reagan during his first four years was *the least well-liked in the past three decades*. Democratic candidates who feared criticizing the president because of his enormous popularity may have been unduly inhibited.

And then we must account for what public opinion analysts often refer to as "rally events"—those specific, dramatic, and sharply focused incidents that may give the president a sudden boost in his approval ratings. The traditional variety involves foreign policy, and in Reagan's case was really a combination of two separate incidents. One was the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut on October 23, 1983, causing the death of 241 Americans, and the other was the invasion of Grenada three days later. The October 21-24 Gallup poll recorded 49 percent approval; the November poll found 53 percent approval. If there was a boost to the president's approval ratings from these events, it was very modest and is difficult to distinguish from the general up-

(Continued on page 54)

by Gordon S. Black

The Life Quality Index

"Quality of Life" is a consideration that underlies decisions about everything from food processors to euthanasia. Those who wrestle with the concept—be they consumers or congressmen—must take any number of factors into account. If they are honest, they will admit that quality of anything—but especially of life—is a slippery object indeed. That doesn't stop people, however, from trying to quantify it. The many attempts to measure the quality of American life include the ambitious efforts of the U.S. Census, Jimmy Carter's Misery Index, *Public Opinion*'s Gross National Spirit Index, and now *USA Today*'s contribution—the Life Quality Index (LQI).

The *USA Today* project, with which I am associated, employs a set of measures to track changes in Americans' lives. The overall LQI is composed of five separate parts:

- Job Satisfaction/Financial Security
- Health
- Marriage and Family
- Environment/Personal Safety
- Social Life

Within each of these areas, we asked several questions about how satisfied people were with various aspects of their lives, how important each aspect was to overall satisfaction, and whether the respondents had experienced any number of events that might have colored their evaluation.

We found that it is much easier to predict and account for variations in dissatisfaction than it is to account for fluctuations in satisfaction. The former seem to respond to events, while the latter are more idiosyncratic. Most of the events we asked about were negative—losing a job, being victimized by crime, getting a divorce or separating from a spouse, experiencing ill health, or having a death in the family, for example. Such negative events played a critical role in determining the level of satisfaction reported.

Guess What Money Buys?

One of the most decisive relationships established by the survey was one of the most predictable: The less income people had, the lower the quality of life they reported. This was true on all five indexes, not just the Financial Security dimension. Poorer people reported poorer health, less satisfying marriages and families, and less pleasurable social lives, in addition to greater financial insecurity. Overall, the Life Quality Index dropped from a high of .70 for those earning over $50,000 to .48 for those earning less than $10,000 (see table 1).

Just as predictable, and almost as powerful, was the relationship between marital status and the various indexes. On every dimension but one, the Health Index, divorced and separated respondents reported much lower scores than those who had never married, than those who were widowed, and than those who were married. Their scores on the Health Index tied those of widows and widowers. Overall, the LQI for the divorced and separated was .48, whereas it was .61 for the widowed, .58 for single people, and .65 for the married.

Equally interesting, and somewhat surprising, were results by race. The overall Life Quality Index for blacks was .52; the LQI for whites was .63 (see table 1). On every index except Health (where scores for blacks were only slightly lower than for whites) blacks reported lower satisfaction scores. This is not particularly startling by itself, but it is intriguing to note that it only held true at income levels up to $30,000. By contrast, blacks who earned more than $30,000 reported identical scores to whites at the same income level (see table 1).

Certain other findings stood out: Age actually does have some effect on the Marriage/Family Index, with scores rising from .65 for the 18-24 year olds to .81 for the 55-64 year olds. And, those who resided in the Great Lakes region had lower average scores than those in other regions.

There were also a number of factors that had no—or only minimal—effect: Sex of the respondents, whether or not they had children, and the number of children living at home had no significant effect on the overall index. Factors such as education, or whether one lived in an urban or a rural area, related only slightly to levels of satisfaction.

Negative Experiences

The quality of one's life changes with events, and we were able to establish relationships between certain experiences and their effects. This may over-

Table 1
LIFE QUALITY INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS

		Region					Income				Sex		Children	
	Total	North-east	South	Great Lakes	Central	West	Over $50,000	$30,000 to $50,000	$10,000 to $30,000	Under $10,000	Male	Female	Yes	No
Life quality index	.61	.61	.63	.57	.64	.62	.70	.66	.60	.48	.61	.62	.62	.60
Job-Financial security index	.46	.47	.47	.39	.47	.49	.70	.61	.40	.13	.49	.44	.45	.50
Health index	.73	.72	.73	.69	.77	.72	.84	.79	.72	.54	.75	.71	.72	.73
Marriage-Family index	.72	.73	.73	.67	.74	.73	.81	.80	.69	.57	.73	.72	.76	.64
Environment-Safety index	.69	.66	.73	.64	.74	.69	.75	.70	.68	.61	.68	.70	.70	.66
Social life index	.69	.70	.70	.66	.70	.72	.74	.75	.68	.56	.69	.70	.70	.68

	Age						Education				Race	
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	No H.S. degree	H.S. degree	Some college	College grad.	Black	White
Life quality index	.61	.58	.62	.65	.66	.62	.57	.61	.62	.65	.52	.63
Job-Financial security index	.49	.47	.47	.50	.49	.35	.29	.43	.47	.62	.35	.48
Health index	.79	.77	.77	.75	.64	.56	.60	.73	.75	.79	.69	.73
Marriage-Family index	.65	.70	.73	.76	.81	.73	.71	.73	.69	.76	.61	.74
Environment-Safety index	.63	.62	.70	.73	.76	.77	.69	.69	.69	.69	.57	.71
Social life index	.71	.64	.68	.73	.76	.73	.68	.69	.69	.72	.60	.71

	Marital Status				Children			Area Live in				
	Single/ Never Married	Single Div./ Sep.	Married	Widow/ Widower	0	1	2+	Central city	Suburb	City town	Rural town	Rural area
Life quality index	.58	.48	.65	.61	.62	.62	.60	.56	.62	.62	.65	.61
Job-Financial security index	.47	.26	.51	.39	.48	.44	.44	.43	.51	.50	.46	.40
Health Index	.76	.58	.77	.58	.70	.77	.75	.68	.76	.76	.74	.68
Marriage-Family index	.57	.47	.83	.68	.71	.74	.74	.70	.72	.74	.75	.71
Environment-Safety index	.64	.64	.71	.74	.70	.68	.68	.54	.65	.68	.78	.76
Social life index	.67	.54	.73	.70	.71	.71	.65	.68	.73	.68	.72	.65

	Black		White		Div./Sep.		Married	
	Above $30,000	Below $30,000	Above $30,000	Below $30,000	Men	Women	No children	Some children
Life quality index	.65	.46	.68	.59	.48	.48	.68	.64
Job-Financial security index	.66	.19	.64	.36	.35	.21	.54	.49
Health index	.81	.61	.81	.68	.55	.59	.73	.79
Marriage-Family index	.78	.55	.81	.68	.44	.48	.86	.80
Environment-Safety index	.67	.54	.73	.70	.65	.63	.73	.69
Social life index	.69	.55	.75	.68	.52	.55	.78	.70

simplify the fairly complex relationship between occurrences and their consequences, but it does yield several dramatic results.

- *The Depression Syndrome:* Professionals in psychology and psychiatry maintain that prolonged depression is one of the most pervasive social and mental health problems. Depression is difficult to measure with a research instrument such as ours, particularly within the time limits imposed by the larger objectives of the study. Nonetheless, we did come up with two questions that appear to elicit reasonably reliable indications of depression: (1) Whether people reported "not having enough fun," and (2) Whether they reported "feeling lonely" much of the time.

Seventeen percent of the respondents reported having too little fun, and 16 percent reported feeling lonely much of the time. These two groups, each of which represents more than 25 million adults, have the lowest overall Life Quality Index scores in our analysis. They each reported an average score of

Table 2
EVENTS AND THE LIFE QUALITY INDEX

Those who have . . .	Score
Gotten married	.68
Increased income	.66
Gotten new job or promotion	.62
Moved to better place	.61
Not enough time to do things	.58
Had a child	.57
Had a death in family	.56
Been laid off during year	.52
Had prolonged ill health in family	.51
Had life threatening illness in family	.51
Lost a promotion or new job	.51
Worked at job not enjoyed	.49
Been laid off and become unemployed	.49
Had home burglarized	.48
Had a lack of entertainment	.48
Suffered about losing a job	.48
Not enough money to live	.48
Had a decline in income	.47
Had a family member victim of crime	.47
Not enough good friends	.46
Serious problems with children	.46
Moved to worse place	.46
Become divorced or separated	.45
Been robbed or assaulted	.42
Family threatened by crime	.42
Not been having any fun	.39
Been feeling lonely much of the time	.39
Serious problems in marriage	.39
Average	.61

.39, compared with an average LQI of .61 for the population.

Whatever the causes of depression, its presence appears to have a more profound impact on the LQI than a number of other negative events: divorce or separation, ill health, a death in the family, loss of a job, financial insecurity, or being a victim of crime, for example (see table 2).

- *Victims of Crime:* After depression, crime has the most devastating effect on the Life Quality Index. Those who were robbed or assaulted and those who believed their families were threatened by crime reported much lower LQI scores: .42 compared to .61 for the population.

The data confirm what sociologists and criminologists have long maintained: Being a victim of crime, particularly one that involves a threat to personal or family safety, is among the most traumatic of life's experiences. It appears to be worse than losing a job, poor health, divorce or separation, or the death of a family member (other than a spouse or child).

Some experiences appear to be associated with small *increases* in the Life Quality Index, with a recent marriage being the most pronounced. A recent increase in income or a job promotion also raise Life Quality Index scores, but not by much. On the whole, negative events and experiences produce much larger changes in the Life Quality Index than do positive events.

Staying Satisfied

An index such as ours invariably leaves out some things. This first attempt represents the beginning of a sustained effort to measure changes in individual experiences and quality of life across the United States. We plan to replicate a portion of the research quarterly, and part of it annually. What we have learned so far is that, in general, our citizenry is pretty much satisfied with things, and we can expect them to continue to be so, as long as they avoid divorce, depression, and the Great Lakes region.

The Life Quality Index (LQI) and its associated indicators, are composite scores of a number of satisfaction questions. At different points in the questionnaire, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with various aspects of their circumstances. Later, they rated each area on a 0-10 scale to gauge how important the area was for their overall satisfaction with life.

The levels of importance assigned to the various component scales were standardized relative to one another, so that the importance of each area was some proportion of the 100 percent of importance attached to all items on the scale. This percentage was multiplied by the satisfaction score, which ranged from +1.00 to −1.00. This method resulted in a series of 5 indexes, each composed of two to five individual satisfaction scales, and one overall index—the Life Quality Index—composed of 17 component scales. Each scale had a potential range of +1.00 to −1.00. Because most people were relatively satisfied, the distributions were skewed in a positive direction, with mean scores ranging from .46 to .73, with Job Satisfaction/Financial Security the lowest and Health the highest. The mean score for the LQI was .61.

The sample was 1,504 randomly selected respondents interviewed by telephone.

Edwards

(Continued from page 51)

ward trend in Reagan's support occurring at the time. The CBS News/*New York Times* poll also found no change in the president's approval rating following these events. As happens so often, there is less to potential rally events than meets the eye. We have yet to see whether this will hold true with the most recent hostage crisis.

Unemployment's Unpopularity

What accounts for shifts in a president's standing with the public? The most common explanation is changes in the state of the economy—particularly in unemployment and inflation rates. Our correlations between average approval per month and the unemployment rate produced a strong relationship. The president experienced a five-point decrease in approval for every one percentage point increase in the unemployment rates. The CPI, a measure of inflation, was only weakly related to overall approval. Perhaps inflation played a modest role in evaluations of the president because it was low throughout most of his first term, and lacked the impact it might have had if it were raging. Or, since prices were continuing to go up, it is possible that Americans failed to recognize that the rate of inflation was changing. A CBS News/*New York Times* poll in May of 1982 found that only 27 percent of Americans knew the rate of inflation was declining.

Conclusion

Ronald Reagan's first-term popularity was less of a public relations phenomenon than many believe. Rather than uniting the public behind him or developing new bases of support, he increased the polarization of the polity along partisan, racial, and sexual lines. As a highly partisan president, he undoubtedly benefited from the increased number of Republicans, but his substantial personal popularity was not translated directly into approval of his performance as president.

Conversely, as Everett Ladd pointed out in the April/May 1984 issue of *Public Opinion*, Reagan and his policies did not generate a broad class struggle. Those who overwhelmingly disapproved of him were concentrated among nonwhites and Democrats, two heavily overlapping groups. It is certainly to his credit that he was able to lead the country in major policy departures without dividing the country more than he did.

The president's strong showing in the polls at the end of his first term was certainly fueled by the economic recovery, and that recovery no doubt continues to contribute to the steadiness of his support in the second term. Important too, has been the effective image projection by the White House. Since the public's perceptions of issues are often hazy, there is ample opportunity to influence its impressions. No president has gone further to exploit this potential than Ronald Reagan. Whether he can keep it up and whether events continue to cooperate remains to be seen.

Gergen

(Continued from page 16)

make one judgment on you and another judgment on your policies. If you add up the president's positions and the president's popularity ratings, they're two different things."

Wading through a stack of recent public opinion polls, one finds a great deal of evidence to back up the Phillips-Cuomo analysis. Polls provide only fragments of information, but pieced together they offer some interesting—and sometimes surprising—insights into the Reagan presidency and its impact upon public opinion.

There is no doubt about Reagan's personal standing. Coming out of the depths of recession, he rose to about 50 percent popularity in the Gallup poll in September 1983 and has remained above that figure ever since—one of the longest streaks of high-approval ratings since Eisenhower. His disapproval ratings have been steady, too, hovering around the 35 percent mark. There are also clear patterns to Reagan's popularity: Men have given him higher scores on every Gallup poll since he took office, and 9 percent more men than women voted for him in 1984. Reagan's popularity slid in early 1985, from 64 to 52 percent. It's back up now, but there will be more dips in the future. In politics, this counts as crystallized opinion.

Some commentators believe Reagan's secret is his style. In truth, the health of the economy is far more responsible. When the recession hit with full fury in 1982, Reagan's ratings dropped into the low forties and high thirties. A recovery on one front eventually brought recovery on the other, but from the beginning, the public has distinguished Reagan and his economic success from the rest of his program. In late 1984, Louis Harris found the public gave Reagan positive marks for his handling of only two issues: inflation and the overall economy. On every other front, the marks were negative—including his handling of taxes (55-42 percent negative)! For much of 1983 and 1984, Reagan's popularity seemed so closely tied to the performance of the economy that his advisers worried he might be vulnerable to economic reversals. Harris wrote that Reagan's hopes for realignment depended primarily upon his success in fighting inflation: If he could whip inflation throughout his term, Harris said, he might get the same credit as FDR for "whipping" unemployment. That may still be true, but the recent bout with cancer has probably solidified opinion so favorably toward Reagan that, like Eisenhower, he can ride out almost any storm.

GOP, Not Conservative, Gains

The primary beneficiaries of Reagan's popularity are his fellow Republicans, far more than his fellow conservatives. Polls have differed about the degree to which voters have been lured into Republican ranks. During the election campaign of 1984, it appeared that Republicans were pulling ahead of Democrats as the largest single political bloc, but since then, Republican identification seems to have receded. A CBS News/*New York Times* poll early this year showed that when independent leanings were taken into account, the Democratic lead over Republicans was not significantly different from four years earlier: 46-42 percent in May 1985 compared to 48-40 percent in January 1981.

Nonetheless, the Republican party under Reagan has clearly gained in public esteem, while Democrats have been heading south. In February of this year, 34 percent told the NBC News poll they generally have a more favorable opinion of Republicans than they did four years ago, and 20 percent said less favorable; by contrast, 16 percent were more impressed with the Democrats and 37 percent less favorably so. Gallup found in April of this year that for the first time since Eisenhower left office, Republicans were rated more highly than Democrats not only for their capacity to keep the peace (a traditional GOP strength) but also to bring prosperity (usually a Democratic strength). By June, Democrats had (barely) regained their edge as the party better able to keep us out of war.

For Republicans, the best news has been among the young, where they have made striking progress. The ABC News/*Washington Post* survey team has found that young people between the ages of eighteen and thirty, drawn by the issues of leadership, military strength, and unemployment, moved from a 54-35 percent Democratic majority in 1980 to a 47-47 percent tie this spring. A Gallup poll this spring among thirteen-to-eighteen year olds, asking how they intended to vote when they could register, found even more startling results: 52 percent Republican, 33 percent Democratic. Everett Carll Ladd, senior editor of this magazine, believes those numbers may be the most favorable for the GOP since Hoover. Reagan's most positive political legacy could well be to his own party, creating a genuine opportunity for it to become a majority.

So far, these poll results sound like they come straight out of the game plan of an Ed Rollins or Lee Atwater: A forceful Republican leader rolls into office, cuts spending and taxes, spurs economic growth, and carries his party to the verge of realignment. As it turns out, however, there is much more to the story.

Consider six other propositions reflected by the polls:

- *Under Reagan, America remains solidly middle-of-the-road.* Pollster Lou Harris has been regularly testing the ideological leanings of the country for nearly two decades, and he has found a philosophical stability that extends straight into the Reagan era. Compare the average of 207 Harris surveys since 1968, asking people whether they considered themselves conservative, middle-of-the-road, or liberal, with his results from surveys at the end of 1984:

	Average	*1984*
Conservative	34%	36%
Middle-of-the-road	40	40
Liberal	17	18

This is hardly the stuff of a conservative revolution. Indeed, the CBS News/*New York Times* survey team has determined that people have even been drifting out of the conservative camp since Reagan came into office. They ask: "On most political matters, generally, do you think of yourself as liberal, moderate, or conservative?" Here are the results from early 1981 compared to early 1985:

	1981	*1985*
Liberal	16%	19%
Moderate	40	42
Conservative	37	30

Neither this survey nor any of the others probes whether the labels have changed meaning (does a "middle-of-the-road" person now view the Soviet Union as benignly as in the past?), but this one does underscore the contention that the mainstream is still the strongest current in American politics.

- *Faith in government is growing again.* One of the greatest ironies of the Reagan presidency is that his very success is restoring confidence in the capacity of those who govern. Jimmy Carter was plagued not just by malaise but also by a pervasive sense that neither he nor anyone else could manage the country. The litany of horrors—Vietnam, Watergate, inflation, the Ayatollah—sent confidence plummeting. But Reagan has begun to restore trust in government again—not to the levels that existed before Vietnam but to the highest point since the early 1970s. Consider this series of results from surveys conducted by the University of Michigan and CBS News/*New York Times* on the question: "Can you trust government in Washington to do what is right?"

	1964	*1972*	*1980*	*1984*
Always/Most of the time	76%	61%	25%	45%
Only some of the time	22	42	69	51

A number of surveys show a parallel upward climb since Reagan became president.

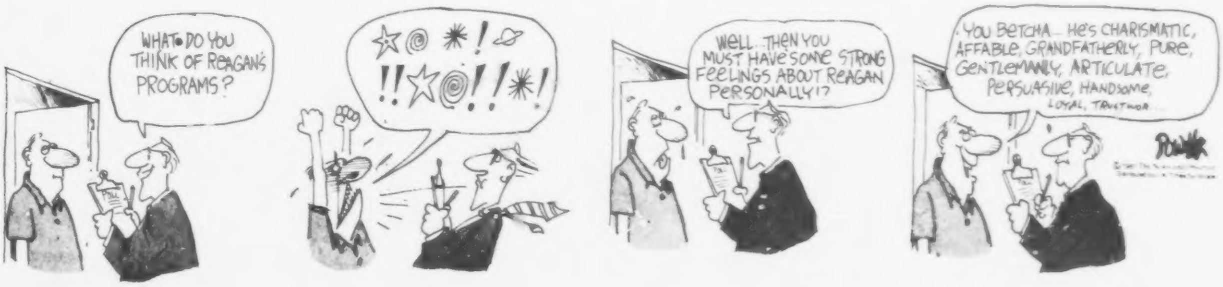
The CBS News/*New York Times* team has also found that between 1980 and 1984, the number who think government is "run for a few big interests" has dropped from a cynical high of 70 percent to 49 percent, while the number who think government is run "for all the people" has doubled from 21 to 40 percent. Other polls found similar surges in confidence since Reagan took office. Harris, for example, shows that in 1984, confidence in institutions made its greatest gains since 1966. Some 42 percent expressed high confidence in the White House, up 17 percent over 1981; 45 percent were high on the military, also up 17 percent over 1981; and 28 percent placed similar confidence in the leaders of Congress, up 12 percent. Moreover Gallup reported early this year that the degree of satisfaction with life in the nation has doubled since Reagan became president, rising from 27 to 52 percent.

Reagan thus finds that after sweeping into office on a crest of anti-government sentiment, the country is now more willing to trust Washington to manage national affairs. Again not the makings of a conservative revolution.

- *Approval of spending cuts is diminishing.* When Reagan came into office, the public was so disillusioned with government spending policies of the past that almost half were in favor of cutbacks. No longer. Gallup, for example, found in 1980 that some 44 percent supported lower domestic spending, but by late 1984, the number dwindled to 20 percent. The ABC News/*Washington Post* survey has put the question in the context of budget deficits and discovered the same trend. Consider its responses to the question, "Do you think that government should cut spending for social programs substantially to reduce the budget deficit?"

	Feb. 1982	*March 1985*
Should cut spending on social programs	45%	33%
Should not	51	66

Part of the growing opposition is probably based on the fight over social security, where polls have shown resistance ranging between 70-80 percent. But a larger reason for today's views is that people think government has already been shaved back, and they are worried that the next round will be even more painful. Some 52 percent told ABC News/*Washington Post* in-


WHAT DO YOU THINK OF REAGAN'S PROGRAMS?
!!
WELL...THEN YOU MUST HAVE SOME STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT REAGAN PERSONALLY!?
YOU BETCHA... HE'S CHARISMATIC, AFFABLE, GRANDFATHERLY, PURE, GENTLEMANLY, ARTICULATE, PERSUASIVE, HANDSOME, LOYAL, TRUSTWOR...

© 1981, Raleigh News and Observer. Reprinted with permission Los Angeles Times Syndicate.

terviewers this January that previous cutbacks in social programs have created serious hardships for many people, and a month later—after Reagan's new budget appeared—some 63 percent told CBS News/*New York Times* they were fearful that additional cuts would hurt them personally or hurt the nation.

These figures do not mean that the public is oblivious to deficits. Some 72 percent told the NBC News poll this February they supported a freeze of all domestic spending, and other polls have people willing to pare back programs (such as Amtrak) that sound bureaucratic and are not delivering immediate services. But opposition to cuts that have a direct impact on people is widening and deepening.

- *The consensus on military spending has collapsed.* Nothing has changed more dramatically during the Reagan years than attitudes on defense. (See Opinion Roundup, pages 32-35.) Compare these answers to a CBS News/*New York Times* poll about federal spending on military and defense programs:

	Jan. 1981	*Feb. 1985*
Should be increased	61%	16%
Kept about same	28	51
Decreased	7	30

Several other polling organizations have noted the same shift: An NBC News poll found in early 1981, for example, that 65 percent wanted to increase defense spending, and four years later, only 19 percent were in that camp.

Concerns over the deficit are driving these changes in opinion, as are the many stories about hammers and toilet seats. But there is another factor that the Reagan administration must find starkly ironic: The more it invests in the military, the more secure people feel and the less they want to spend in the future.

- *Americans are more complacent about the Soviets.* Five years ago, many Americans were ready to vote for a fire-eating anti-Communist because they worried that we were sliding into a position of military inferiority. As Ben Wattenberg has often argued in this magazine, Americans don't like to be number two. But with Reagan there in office and the country in the midst of rearmament, the public is now much more relaxed about the Soviet threat. Here are the results from ABC News/*Washington Post* polls asking the public to compare our military posture with that of the Soviets:

	April 1981	*Jan. 1985*
Soviets ahead	41%	22%
U.S. equal or stronger	54	73

In those same polls, 31 percent said in 1981 they would like the United States to strive for superiority, but by 1985, that number had dropped to 19 percent. Some 51 percent said early this year they thought Reagan was seeking superiority. A related poll by CBS News/*New York Times* in January of this year found that by a 69-23 percent margin, people believe Reagan has significantly strengthened the country's military defenses, and by 57-34 percent, they give him credit for increasing other nations' respect for the United States.

Unfortunately from Reagan's perspective, greater feelings of security only seem to whet the appetite for an arms accord with the Soviets. In January of this year, some 76 percent told ABC News/*Washington Post* that the United States should negotiate an arms-limitation agreement even if there is some risk that the Soviets will cheat. And a full 72 percent thought the Soviets would indeed cheat!

Democrats in the House may be willing to pump more money into rebel causes overseas, but few Americans want to go much further. And not many even pay much attention to places like Central America. This spring, the number who knew which side we were on in Nicaragua finally climbed up to 38 percent, but of that number some 50 percent wanted to cut off all of our activities there. Even when American hostages were seized in Beirut, the country showed little interest in retaliating. The country is simply not in a very tough-minded mood; one hawk in the White House may be all that people want.

- *Social conservatism isn't catching fire.* A major social issue on which Reagan has made progress is the death penalty. Gallup found that in 1971, some 49 percent favored it; by 1981, as conservatives made a strong case, the number had risen to 66 percent, and by February of this year, it had increased to 72 percent, the highest figure Gallup has found in a half-century of polling.

On other social issues, however, the record is mixed. Polls show strong support for voluntary prayer (69 percent favor, according to Gallup) but it doesn't appear to generate political results. The Equal Rights Amendment continues to attract high levels of support. And on abortion, the public doesn't favor the constitutional amendment to reverse the Supreme Court's decision.

Back to the Middle

Adding up all the numbers, it's difficult to argue that Reagan is presiding over a conservative revolution. The man himself has taken a firm hold upon the public imagination, and he has opened the door for his party, but the public isn't flooding through it. If anything, the country today appears to be more mainstream than when Reagan took office, and there is a greater desire to keep government just about the way it is—with an arms-control agreement thrown in for good measure.

The polls in no way diminish what Reagan and his followers have accomplished. To have restored the country's faith in itself and its future is an enormous change; so is the shift away from the policies of the 1970s. But the polls tell us Reagan hasn't set the nation on a rightward course—he's put it on an even keel.

King

(Continued from page 19)

Table 2

Question: Which of these statements do you most agree with?

	May 1947	Dec. 1984
The important job for the government is to make certain that there are good opportunities for each person to get ahead on his own	40%	30%
The important job for the government is to guarantee every person a steady job and a decent standard of living	55	65
Don't know	5	5

Source: Surveys by Social Surveys (The Gallup Poll) Ltd., London, latest that of December 1984.

Thatcher likewise preaches toughness, in both thought and policy; yet the British people are becoming softer. At the time of the last election, in June 1983, Gallup found that 46 percent of voters thought that, in difficult economic times, it was better to be tough than caring; 34 percent thought the opposite. When Gallup asked the same question in October of last year, the proportions had been reversed: softies outnumbered toughies by 45 percent to 37 percent.

Hard Times, Hard Sell

As though all this were not enough, there is a direct clash between the government and a growing majority of Britons on the great central issues of taxing and spending. The Thatcher government is determined to cut public spending on the ground that it tends to be inefficient and also on the ground that spending cuts are an essential preliminary to tax cuts (there are no supply-siders in Her Britannic Majesty's Treasury). Gallup every year asks voters which they would prefer: taxes being cut, even if it means some reduction in government services such as health, education, and welfare; or government services such as health, education, and welfare being extended, even if it means some increases in taxes. The status quo is also offered as an option. Responses to this question have been reported in previous issues of *Public Opinion*, but the latest findings, since November of last year, are the most spectacular yet. As Table 3 shows, when Thatcher came to power six years ago opinion on the issue was exactly split. Today the service-extenders outnumber the tax-cutters by nearly four to one. Thatcher has preached a crusade against big government; the people, it seems, love big government, and want it even bigger.

What explains this divorce between one of the most dynamic leaders Britain has ever produced and the people who have twice sent her to Downing Street (albeit with a plurality rather than a majority of the popular vote)? The answer is obvious—and will probably already have occurred to most readers. The Thatcher government has presided over Britain's worst postwar recession, and during a time of recession people look to government to solve problems that they clearly cannot solve themselves. Self-reliance, almost inevitably, is at a discount. Moreover, in its efforts to curb public spending, the Thatcher government has cut some public services—parts of the National Health Service, school books, higher education, council-house building, a range of environmental services—and people, feeling the cuts, do not like them. The public's negative reactions are not to some abstraction called "Thatcherism"; they are to the felt consequences of a serious economic downturn and to the specific policies that the present government has introduced to deal with it.

Such negative reactions could seriously affect the government's chances of winning the next election, which is due in 1987 or 1988. As the *Economist* of London put it, many voters, on the strength of Gallup and MORI data, would not pass courses in economics, "but the only exam they have to sit is in the polling booth." From where Thatcher sits, however, the problem is more serious than the winning or losing of a single election. She and her colleagues want their economic revolution to be irreversible. Parts of it, as we saw, almost certainly will be; but the data set out above—however immediate and understandable their causes—suggest that Thatcher has failed to bring about a revolution in mass economic and political thinking in Britain. She has been a powerful educator, but adverse economic circumstances turn out to have been even more powerful. The paradox is that Thatcher's message, designed to deal with hard times, is probably salable to a democratic public only in good times. ✓

Table 3

Question: People have different views about whether it is more important to reduce taxes or keep up government spending. How about you? Which of these statements comes closest to your own view?

	Mar. 1979	Mar. 1980	Mar. 1981	Feb. 1982	Feb. 1983	Oct. 1983	May 1984	Nov. 1984	Feb. 1985
Taxes being cut, even if it means some reduction in government services, such as health, education, and welfare	37%	23%	22%	22%	24%	18%	15%	13%	17%
Things should be left as they are	26	26	25	27	23	29	27	26	19
Government services such as health, education, and welfare should be extended, even if it means some increases in taxes	37	52	53	52	52	53	58	62	63

Source: Surveys by Social Surveys (The Gallup Poll) Ltd., London, latest that of February 1985.

(Continued from page 7)

	In Poverty					Not In Poverty							
	Black	White	Men	Women	Total	Black	White	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	National
Greatest responsibility for helping the poor: voluntary charities, churches, families and relatives, government, poor themselves													
Charities	7%	3%	2%	6%	4%	11%	8%	7%	8%	8%	7%	7%	7%
Churches	11	34	28	21	24	13	13	18	13	16	19	15	17
Families and relatives	2	7	9	2	5	3	15	17	10	13	16	8	12
The government	55	23	31	36	34	38	33	28	39	33	29	39	34
The poor themselves	25	23	26	29	28	25	20	22	18	20	22	19	21
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Don't know/all about equally	0	8	4	5	4	10	9	6	12	9	5	11	8
Statement closest to your position: "Government is responsible for well-being of all its citizens and has an obligation to take care of them," or "People are responsible for their own well-being and have an obligation to take care of themselves"													
Government is responsible	53	12	19	25	23	30	24	21	27	24	21	27	24
People are responsible	44	76	73	68	69	61	71	66	67	67	67	67	67
Don't know	3	12	8	7	8	9	5	13	6	9	12	6	9
Best way to spend money to help poor: spend what money we have trying to eliminate causes of poverty, or better to give money we have to poor people so they can get on their feet													
Trying to eliminate causes	46	64	63	44	51	68	70	65	70	68	64	66	65
Giving money to poor people	43	28	32	47	41	23	23	25	27	26	26	30	28
Don't know	2	6	1	6	4	9	4	6	3	4	6	3	5
Even if government were willing to spend whatever is necessary to eliminate poverty in United States, does government know enough about how to do this													
Yes, we know how	60	10	29	27	28	27	17	29	15	22	29	16	22
No, we don't know how	37	69	45	63	56	68	77	66	80	73	63	76	70
Don't know	3	20	25	9	15	5	5	4	5	4	7	8	7
During the 1960s, under Kennedy and Johnson, the United States government launched "The War on Poverty." The war made things much better for poor, somewhat better, had no impact, or made things worse for poor													
Made things better	77	45	45	55	51	72	53	56	57	57	55	54	55
Was no help	16	29	21	32	28	14	31	31	26	28	30	27	28
Don't know	7	26	34	13	21	14	16	13	17	15	15	19	17
Main purpose behind welfare: designed to help poor people get back on their feet again, or designed simply to provide for needs of poor people while they are poor													
Help poor people get back on their feet	26	45	50	31	38	48	52	51	53	52	50	46	48
Provide for the needs of poor people	73	47	46	63	57	49	44	45	45	45	45	50	48
Don't know	1	5	1	5	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3
More important in your life: working hard and doing what is expected of you, or doing things that give you personal satisfaction and pleasure													
Working hard	86	67	77	79	78	71	63	65	65	65	66	66	66
Personal satisfaction	14	21	16	15	16	27	28	29	27	28	27	25	26
Don't know	0	11	6	6	6	2	8	5	8	6	6	9	7

Note: In a few cases, numbers in these tables differ slightly from the numbers shown in the Opinion Roundup pages on poverty (pages 25-31). In Opinion Roundup, we calculated out "don't know" responses of 10% or less.

(Text follows on page 60)

consideration, in the public's view, are old people who are poor, the working poor, poor people without job skills, and least of all, poor unwed mothers. There is an indication here that the public differentiates between those who are poor because of circumstances beyond their control (children, the handicapped, those who can't find work) and those whose poverty is at least to some extent their own fault.

In fact, the work ethic is alive and well among the poor. When people who live in poverty are asked, "Which do you think is more important in life: working hard and doing what is expected of you, or doing the things that give you personal satisfaction and pleasure?" 78 percent subscribe to the idea of hard work while only 16 percent choose personal satisfaction and pleasure. That is a stronger commitment to the work ethic than one finds among the nonpoor; they endorse "working hard and doing what is expected of you" by 65 to 28 percent.

When asked their opinion of "workfare—the government program that requires poor people to work, if they are physically able to, before they can receive poverty benefits" the poor favored the idea by a 59-to-3 percent margin (the rest had not heard anything about workfare or were not sure how they felt about it). That is a slightly stronger endorsement than workfare received from the nonpoor, who favored it 51 to 4 percent.

The poor clearly share the same values and attitudes as other Americans. Where they differ, sometimes, is in their view of the circumstances of poverty. On this subject, we may accept the assessments of poor people as more realistic, or at least more likely to be informed by experience.

Many Americans, for example, are convinced that jobs are available for anyone willing to work. Indeed, 54 percent say so, with only 43 percent taking the opposite point of view. But among poor people, the perception is different. Fifty-nine percent think poor people find it very hard to get work, and only 31 percent think there are jobs available to anyone who wants them.

Most Americans are sure that welfare benefits make poor people even more dependent and encourage them to remain in poverty. People who live in poverty are less convinced. Thus, 16 percent of the nonpoor and 31 percent of the poor believe that welfare benefits give poor people a chance to stand on their own two feet and get started again.

Both the rich and the poor consider unemployment one of our country's most important national problems. But three times as many poor people as nonpoor people say that inflation is a major problem. In fact, among the poor, inflation is about equal to unemployment in importance, 19 to 17 percent, whereas unemployment outweighs inflation among the nonpoor by 16 to 6 percent. To poor people, many of them on a fixed income, even the smallest rise in prices can be catastrophic.

Consider also the notion that a permanent underclass of poor people is emerging in the United States. By better than three to one, nonpoor respondents say that most poor people have been poor for a long time and will probably remain that way. But once again, the attitudes of poor people themselves are instructive. Poor people are twice as likely to report that they move into and out of poverty in a relatively brief time. And, indeed, some recent studies suggest that less than 10 percent of poor people remain in poverty for as long as ten years.

The public at large splits, 49 to 44 percent, over whether poor people lack basic social and occupational skills and thus belong to a newly developing underclass. Poor people, however, reject that opinion—52 percent say their abilities are not all that much different from other Americans, while 40 percent think they lack basic skills.

Reagan and the Poor

The public clearly believes that the poverty problem is difficult, if not intractable. And it is not encouraged by the record of government action in the past. But none of this means that the government should abandon its commitment to helping the poor. That commitment is based on moral, not practical, considerations. And the survey makes it clear that many Americans are doubtful that the Reagan administration shares that moral commitment.

Despite President Reagan's generally high overall job rating at the time the poll was taken (62 to 31 percent positive), his handling of the poverty problem got very low marks (58 to 34 percent negative), with the sharpest distinction made by members of the baby boom generation (65 to 31 positive overall versus 65 to 28 percent negative on poverty). People who live in poverty split evenly on Reagan's overall job rating and rate him almost three-to-one negative on his handling of poverty.

As has been the case since the fall of 1981, a majority of Americans are convinced that Ronald Reagan cares more about the rich, compared with 30 percent who think he cares about all income groups equally. Very few think he cares more about poor people. (See page 31.) Moreover, the nation is not convinced that his management of poverty programs protects the truly needy; only 40 percent feel the "safety net" for the poor is still in place, while 50 percent think the poor have been left unprotected. Among the poor themselves, this conviction is held by nearly a three-to-one margin.

In short, while practical judgments about what government can do to fight poverty may have changed, the moral consensus has not. The public shares the Reagan administration's assessment that the federal government has done badly in the past. And they are skeptical that much can be done in the future. But they do not feel this justifies abandoning the effort. Many Americans, and most poor people, are convinced that the Reagan administration has done just that.

R311-1

Public Opinion

✓

Is There a Liberal Tilt?

NEW EVIDENCE

Are Rank-and-File Journalists—
(Not Just Media Elites)
More Liberal than their Readers?
Does It Matter?

Are Black Leaders More Liberal
than the Black Public?

0009020 G
ACQUISITIONS EDITOR
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INDEX
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE
4520 EAST-WEST HIGHWAY
WASHINGTON DC 20014

plus
The Non-adversarial Press, Women in the 1984 Election, Attitudes Toward Business, About Health Care Costs
—and in Opinion Roundup—
Reagan's Tax Plan, Star Wars, Americans' Economic Forecast,
Black Attitudes About South Africa—Here and There, Germany After Deployment,
and Pakistani Attitudes About Afghanistan

About the Authors

WILLIAM C. ADAMS is professor of public administration in the school of government and business administration at George Washington University, and a frequent contributor to *Public Opinion*.

BARBARA G. FARAH is director of surveys for the *New York Times* and works on the design and analysis of the CBS News/*New York Times* polls. She directed the National Election Studies and the Convention Delegate Surveys, 1972-1985, at the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.

WALTER GUZZARDI is a member of the board of editors of *Fortune* magazine. He won the Gerald Loeb award while he was a *Fortune* writer, and he is currently at work on a biography of James Gordon Bennett, founder of the *New York Herald*.

TERRY W. HARTLE is a resident fellow in education policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute. He was a research scientist and Washington liaison for the Educational Testing Service, as well as a consultant to numerous educational associations.

I. A. LEWIS is director of the *Los Angeles Times* poll. He previously served as a partner in the Roper Organization, director of polling for CBS News, and director of elections for NBC News. Before entering the survey field, Mr. Lewis spent twenty-two years as a reporter, foreign radio correspondent, and associate producer and writer for television.

LINDA S. LICHTER is co-director of the Center for Media and Public Affairs in Washington, D.C. and senior research associate at Columbia University's Research Institute on International Change.

THOMAS A. W. MILLER is publications editor with the Roper Organization Inc., in New York. Prior to joining Roper, he was managing director of Hudson Research Europe, an international consulting firm in Paris.

KEITH POOLE is an associate professor of political economy in the graduate school of industrial administration at Carnegie-Mellon University. He is co-author, with Harmon Zeigler, of *Women, Public Opinion, and Politics* (1985).

BURNS W. ROPER is chairman of the board of the Roper Organization Inc. He has been engaged in market and opinion research since 1946, and is currently involved in producing the *Roper Reports*. He is chairman of the board of the National Council on Public Polls and the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research in Storrs, Connecticut.

WILLIAM SCHNEIDER is an AEI resident fellow and senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution. He is a political analyst for the *National Journal* and the *Los Angeles Times*. He is co-author, with Alan Baron, of *The Radical Center: New Directions in American Politics*, to be published by Simon & Schuster.

JOHN TAYLOR was a research assistant at the American Enterprise Institute during the summer of 1985 and is now a senior at the University of North Carolina.

HUMPHREY TAYLOR is president of Louis Harris and Associates in New York. Involved in survey research since 1963, he founded his own company, Opinion Research Centre, which conducted all the political polling for the British Conservative Party.

ELDA VALE is research manager at McGraw-Hill Publications. Formerly with the election and survey unit of CBS News, she designed and analyzed CBS News/*New York Times* polls and served as trend analyst for the CBS News 1984 election coverage.

HARMON ZEIGLER is Phillip M. Phibbs professor of politics and government at the University of Puget Sound. He was formerly chair of the department at the University of Puget Sound. Oregon. He is co-author, with Keith Poole, of *Women, Public Opinion, and Politics*. He has co-authored two books with Thomas R. Dye, *The Irony of Democracy* and *American Politics in the Media Age*.

The material in the Opinion Roundup section of the magazine has been prepared with the invaluable assistance of the Roper Center, the oldest and largest archive of opinion survey data in the world. Final editorial responsibilities for the contents of Opinion Roundup rests, of course, with the editors of the magazine. The Roper Center is an affiliate of the University of Connecticut, Yale University, and Williams College. The center's archives are open to all students of public opinion on a contractual basis. Everett Carll Ladd, is senior editor of *Public Opinion* magazine, and executive director of the Roper Center.

Public Opinion

Volume 8, Number 4 August/September 1985

Publisher
William J. Baroody, Jr.

Co-Editors
Seymour Martin Lipset
Ben J. Wattenberg
Senior Editor
Everett Carll Ladd
Managing Editor
Karlyn H. Keene
Deputy Managing Editor
Victoria A. Sackett
Assistant Editor
Graham Hueber
Research Assistant
Kay Smith
Interns
Rita Cortes
Ellen Sears

Editorial Board
David R. Gergen, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick,
Irving Kristol, Howard Penniman,
Austin Ranney, Richard M. Scammon,
William Schneider, Laurence H.
Silberman, Herbert Stein, and
Richard J. Whalen

Editorial Associate
Marilyn M. Potter
Assistants
John Benson
Lois Timms

Art & Design Director
Pat Taylor
Chart Illustrator
Hördur Karlsson
Staff Editor
Elizabeth D. Ashooh

PUBLIC OPINION, Aug./Sept. 1985, Vol. 8, No. 4. Published bimonthly by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Copyright 1985 American Enterprise Institute.

Subscription rates: $26.00 for one year, $48.00 for two years. Individual copy: $5.00. Information on bulk orders of multiple subscriptions available on request. Editorial and business offices: c/o AEI, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Send changes of address and all subscription correspondence to Circulation Department, c/o AEI, same address. "American Enterprise Institute" and are registered service marks of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C.

ISSN 0149-9157

U.S.A. Newsstand Distribution by
Four Star News Distributors, Inc.
33-30 57th St. Woodside N.Y. 11377

CONTENTS

2 THE SECRET LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN THE PRESS AND THE GOVERNMENT
by Walter Guzzardi
The popular assumption is that the press and government are adversaries. But this author argues that the press is actually a strong force for legitimizing the very institutions it takes to task.

6 VIEWS ON THE NEWS
by William Schneider and I. A. Lewis
This substantial survey provides new evidence for both sides in the media bias debate.

12 AMERICANS TAKE STOCK OF BUSINESS
by Burns W. Roper and Thomas A. W. Miller
General Dynamics, General Electric, E. F. Hutton. Have all these tempests given business a black eye?

16 HEALING THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
by Humphrey Taylor
A major revolution is taking place in health care. Technology grows more sophisticated by the minute. Attitudes are changing, too, helping to bring costs under control.

21 OPINION ROUNDUP
Reagan's Tax Plan, Star Wars, Americans' Economic Forecast, Black Attitudes about South Africa—Here and There, Germany after Deployment, and Pakistani Attitudes about Afghanistan.

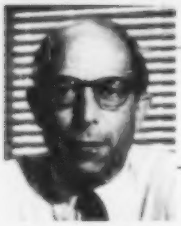
41 WHO SPEAKS FOR BLACK AMERICA?
by Linda S. Lichter
A unique look at the social, economic, and political attitudes of black leaders and black America.

45 THE BEIRUT HOSTAGES: ABC AND CBS SEIZE AN OPPORTUNITY
by William C. Adams
ABC News got the scoop on hostage interviews, but CBS News got the better story. A comparison of the two networks' coverage of the TWA hijacking.

49 WHAT'S BIG ON CAMPUS
by Terry W. Hartle and John Taylor
In 1984 college students supported Republican Reagan in record numbers. A look behind those numbers at student attitudes today.

54 POLITICAL WOMAN: GENDER INDIFFERENCE
by Harmon Zeigler and Keith Poole
It may be time to abandon any notion of a women's vote. The authors tell us why.

57 CRIME: A TALE OF TWO CITIES
by Barbara G. Farah and Elda Vale
In some ways, Los Angeles and New York City are not really three thousand miles apart. Their residents agree about the cities' major problem and how to cure it.



by Walter Guzzardi

The Secret Love Affair Between the Press and Government

The idea of an adversarial relationship between the government and the press seems irresistible to members of both institutions. Widespread acceptance of this comfortable platitude has been encouraged by acerbic and colorful comments from the principal players, especially presidents of the United States. But the exchange of insults obscures the ties and common interests that bind the institutions together. Far from being separate and inimical entities, the press and the government are inextricably linked, woven together for the common purpose of strengthening the cause of democracy. In this union, the press has become a tremendous—and often unappreciated—force for legitimizing governmental institutions and free enterprise.

Mutual Antipathy

Presidents love to complain about the media, and they can count on full quotation when they do. Harry Truman's characteristic crack that "When the press stops abusing me, I'll know I'm in the wrong pew" seems mild compared to the sequels. For Lyndon Johnson, meeting the press was like "looking down the open end of a gun barrel." Richard Nixon was more vulgar: Coming back from the rear of the presidential plane, where the press was sitting, he remarked to an aide, "It sure smells bad back there, doesn't it?" And once when the press entered the Cabinet room to take pictures, Nixon couldn't resist: "It's only coincidental that we were talking about pollution when the press walk[ed] in." Jimmy Carter found the press too dramatic and superficial. He probably shared Jody Powell's bitter belief that the media thought Carter to be "a devious, manipulative bastard, and by God they were determined to make sure the country knew about it." Although given high marks for handling the media well, Ronald Reagan often takes pot shots at the press, judging it deliberately unfair and allowing its exclusion from events such as the Grenada invasion. Some of Reagan's military chiefs go further, pitching into reporters who they say are perfectly willing to endanger American lives in their eagerness to be first to spill illicitly obtained military secrets. In what our military leaders must have regarded as a mortal blow, an officer at the State Department, Lt. General John Chain, removed a sinning reporter's portrait from a department wall.

A few barbs come from the press side, too. "We who hate your gaudy guts salute you" was William Allen White's famous greeting to FDR. Today, journalists lack that sense of style: Instead, they fill the air with self-righteous talk about their noble purposes, which, they insist, the president seeks to defeat. The media today seem to reciprocate presidential dislike and distrust, baying after Nixon, mocking Ford, disparaging Carter, resenting Reagan.

Although anecdotal and judgmental, such evidence imparts a kind of validity to the adversarial proposition: As in sex and psychoanalysis, the displeasure of either party (much less both parties) defines the experience. Still, a more useful perspective emerges when media and government are thought of as symbiotic. To consider one of them essential and the other derivative and obstructive overlooks the unbreakable nexus between the two. The point is simple, but it is often ignored: Government officials must have the media to get across their message, and the media must have the officials, for they are irreplaceable sources. In many areas, the economy being a conspicuous example, the government is the only supplier of data. Elsewhere, government officials stand comfortably on the demand side: Consumers want to know about them.

The Grand Design

Both press and government are vital partners in the democratic experiment. Despite conflicts between them, the press accepts the presidency as an institution, and it does so surprisingly uncritically. That acceptance extends to many other government institutions, even those recently born, and to a host of American principles, values, and conventions as well. And, as it did in the early sixties, the press vigorously rejects radical change.

The widely held judgment that the press is liberal tends to obscure the authority that the press grants to traditional American government and its basic interests. "If the system were in peril," James MacGregor Burns has written, "the media would almost unanimously rally to its defense." Burns is undoubtedly correct. Columnist Richard Cohen confesses to a perplexing tendency to defend his nation from foreign threats who disguise themselves as interviewers:

> I get interviewed on foreign television as a critic of the Reagan administration. But then a funny thing happens. This critic . . . turns into John Wayne. The Duke can find hardly anything to criticize.

This is the propensity of print journalism, and it asserts itself in television news as well.

The media's central conservative strain shows up strikingly in the stylized picture of the nation that they present. That picture, although very far from the "mirror to the world" that news people insist they hold up, consistently supports American institutional life—economic as well as governmental. Reporting may sometimes be naive and obsessed with melodrama, and it too rarely questions underlying assumptions, but the flow of news is essentially benign. The media put their benedictions on private ownership, the heroics of individual entrepreneurs, and the concept of benevolent capitalism. Around those principles, the press organizes both its moral code and its definition of the news.

But the press seems to misunderstand its own mission. Among journalism's more outrageous claims is that it conveys "a true picture of life," or, in the words of White House correspondent Helen Thomas, that it seeks "only the truth." Sadly for those of us in search of enlightenment, the press knows no more than we do about life or about the truth—philosophers know more, taxi drivers and barbers know no less—and it has no idea what happened to the human race yesterday. Even if it did, it wouldn't tell us. Its deeper purpose is the undeclared one that Walter Lippmann pointed to fifty years ago: to report the central transactions in a democratic society—the transactions among institutions.

These institutions, almost invariably adjudged good by the press, make up the country's great entitlement. Fortunately for the earnings of the big companies in the news business, these good institutions often inadvertently harbor bad people. Straining at their traces, the press will see to it that these aberrant types are brought to justice, their malfeasances laid bare for all to regard. Since the press knows what is right—just listen to those editors—it sets about making things conform to that view. Hence the inclination toward institutional deification and the assumption that we are entitled to honest government. It is not thus everywhere. In Italy institutions are most often adjudged to be bad, and are usually ridiculed; malfeasants are not aberrant but commonplace. No doubt to its detriment, Italy doesn't think itself entitled to much better.

In a long, dense book called *Deciding What's News*, Columbia sociologist Herbert Gans argued that such a sense of entitlement is the ultimate arbiter of the news. By identifying people he calls "Knowns"—starting with the president, through presidential candidates, congressional leaders, members of the Supreme Court, and federal and state officeholders—and studying media attention given them, Gans found that they dominate the news with surprising consistency, and by wide margins over competitors for public attention. Among the Unknowns, the people getting the space were criminals, rioters, strikers, and other variously motivated protesters against conventional social order. Victims came next. Most people—like me, and possibly like you— who are seldom wrongdoers or victims, were left out: Editors find us a bore. "All the news that's fit to print" is defined by an exclusionist elite: It is what the editors of the *New York Times*, for reasons they would have a hard time explaining, don't like.

But an even higher set of decisions about what's news is made not by the *New York Times* but by government officials. They set the agenda, they are the real sources of the news, they are "the first-stage decision makers." To this process, which Lippmann called "the manufacture of consent," Gans attributes a circular quality. Knowns show the media where the stories are and how to get them. Then the "Knowns" monitor the media to test the reactions. From that monitoring—"the only nonfiction that most Americans see, hear, or read," according to Gans—the nation defines itself. The Knowns lead the editors, whom Gans calls "managers of the symbolic arena . . . protectors of order . . . moral guardians."

What happens to you and me is ignored by the "gatekeepers" (another neologism used to describe editors) who, in so many ways led by the Knowns, make assignments, allocate space to events they consider interesting, and bury where history can never find it the story that doesn't strike their fancy. Editors also manufacture what Daniel Boorstin called "media events": If the *New York Times* were to send Norman Mailer to Ouagadougou, for example, Ouagadougou would bust out all over your morning paper, although nothing may have happened there.

Institutional Deification: The Case of the Fed

The search for institutions that define the news uncovers none more sacrosanct than the Federal Reserve Board. Hostages come and go, but nothing makes the wheels of news turn more regularly and predictably than the Fed. The figure of Paul Volcker—not many newspaper readers can still be ignorant of his height or his cigar-smoking habits, irrelevant as they are—and the perennial drama about his successor perpetuate Fed mythology. Enthroned, the great "independent" American institution is insulated from change: After Donald Regan, now White House chief of staff, was bold enough to suggest that radical change—maybe putting the Fed under control of the Treasury Department?—might be studied, he had to rush hastily for cover from the storm.

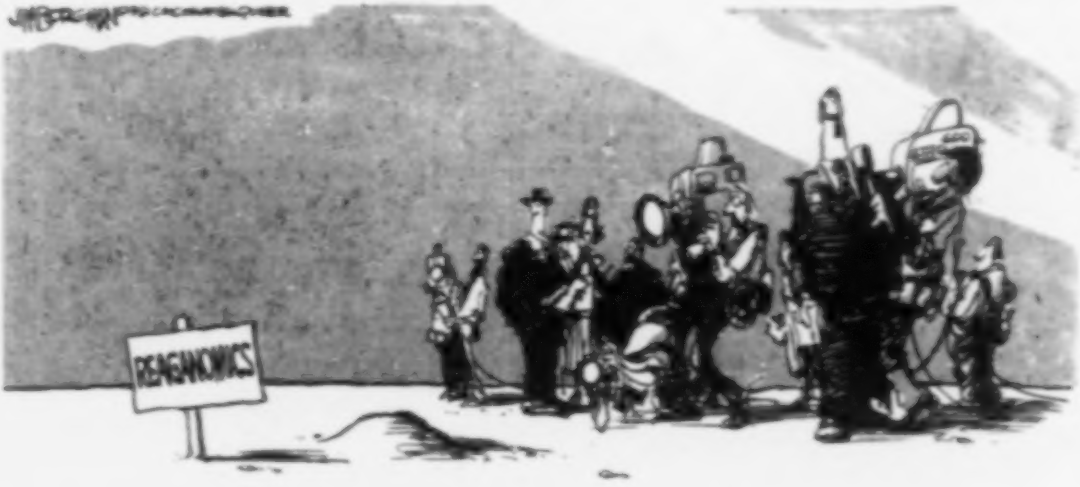
In the years since the popular press discovered what the Fed was, it has become the point of departure for stories about the economy. Other non-Fed-centered views are badly neglected. Some evidence supports Milton Friedman's ideas that the Fed is a ponderous bureaucracy whose principal aim is self-perpetuation, that it uses outdated technologies, and that it constantly shifts its goals. Seldom does the press point out that the source for the performance of the Fed is chiefly the Fed itself, which, some think, plays a shell game with its various measures of the money supply—all the Marvelous Ms—to argue its own case. Nor does the press examine much the thought that the Fed's recent acceleration may have little effect at all.

Although the idea would shock most businessmen, inherent conservatism is what drives most of the media's economic and financial reporting. In ways probably not fully understood by the practitioners themselves, warming waves of news support the principles that support the republic: a belief in capitalism (if properly restrained by the blessed institutions of government), a faith in free enterprise, a reverence for the risk-taking entrepreneur (but, matching another belief, only when he is successful), and an abiding affection for small business. True, the press complains a lot about business, and is unfailingly appalled to learn that men and markets often fail to conform to the media's ideals.

A few years ago, shock broke out all over the press when the huge salaries that corporate executives pay themselves came to public notice. The shudders have subsided somewhat with the nation's recent prosperity, but when the economy turns down again, and CEO salaries still go up, you can count on renewed indignation. The whole exhibition is charming in its innocence. In the press's moral order, executives are not supposed to be so grasping and greedy, nor should they give advantages to organized labor that might affect company performance long after new leaders have taken over. Anchormen raise eyebrows and offer disapproving looks when they recount the salaries of business bosses—but they usually neglect to admit that they, too, are members of the six- (or seven-) figure club.

In fact, top executives of big corporations have always taken good care of themselves, and they always will. In a crunch, they come first. Good times or bad, right or wrong, they get rich—and what's shocking about that, unless you have a code that says they shouldn't?

During the several oil crises, the press has also reacted with horror. "Obscene profits" were mulcting the helpless man in the street; Congress was aroused by headlines saying that "Exxon's profits rose 170 percent"; legislators sharpened their pencils. Neglected were the not especially difficult analytical points. When the prices of crude go up, oil company profits will follow, and they will also follow them down. Poor preceding years make increases in profit seem enormous by comparison: Afterwards, the high base makes the declines seem very steep,



"...AND SO IT SEEMS CLEAR TO THIS REPORTER THAT REAGANOMICS HAS FAILED.... FAILED TO THRIVE IN A CLIMATE OF OPTIMISM... FAILED TO BLOSSOM INTO A VIABLE ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVE... FAILED TO BEAR THE FRUIT OF PROSPERITY — AT LEAST IN THESE FIRST FIVE DISAPPOINTING MINUTES."

Reprinted with permission of King Features Syndicate, Inc. © 1981.

but that never attracts the same kind of attention. Many of the "obscenities" were inventory profits that benefited shareholders—often pension funds. The pension funds, of course, aided that man in the street who was supposedly being victimized. Anyway, companies are supposed to profit from market opportunities, raising prices ultimately to alleviate scarcity.

Alliances

Behind the press's anger and numbskullery, though, lies tacit approval of our economic enterprises. Note what directions the press did *not* go in: No editorial suggested that a government official should be appointed to the boss's job at Chrysler to protect the American taxpayers' money. Nor, during the obscene profits era, was the air filled with proposals that the United States should follow the example of other countries and take over the oil companies. Even when the government had to bail out Lockheed some years ago, state ownership wasn't exactly a hot topic. Frivolous and shallow the press may be, but it adheres to its faith in our system of enterprise.

Small business, that child of free enterprise, is another media god. Jimmy Carter happily distributed medals on "Small Business Day" at the White House—one of his few media successes. The *New York Times* a few months ago ran a fulsome piece about Frank Swain, lawyer and ombudsman for the Small Business Administration, lauding him for promoting the interests of "this largely unrepresented segment of American business," and for fighting to get small business a bigger share of Pentagon procurement. Never mind that small business has plenty of clout in Washington: Not even President Reagan himself has been big enough to get rid of the scandal-ridden Small Business Administration.

Along with the Fed and the SBA stand a platoon of respected government agencies, which the press likes to think of as defenders of the underprivileged and helpless. One of the oldest is the Securities and Exchange Commission, that selfless protector of the legendary small investor. Tracking the torturous ways of the SEC some years ago, George Stigler, the Nobel prize-winning economist, was unable to uncover a single small investor better off for the Commission's activism, but the legend lives on. The Commission's own secret crusade, aimed at arrogating more and more power unto itself, goes unnoticed while it enlarges its authority in the courts, reaching in to bank regulation, better left to other bodies; to the prosecution of journalists who betray their employers by trading on advance knowledge of the next day's news—new territory for the SEC; and by aggressively pursuing the evils of insider trading, where this Commission intends to leave its mark on history. The only Commission foray to elicit an unpopular response in the press came predictably when the SEC started making noises about having reporters divulge their own financial holdings when they write business stories—an idea from which the Commission beat a hasty retreat, recognizing that it was about to alienate its best ally.

If businessmen are occasionally enraged by jabs from Dan Rather (who isn't?), they can turn to *Indiana Business* or *Corporate Report: Minnesota* for therapy. Reporting about business in regional periodicals, which apoplectic businessmen rarely mention, can be positively sycophantic. These journals, described recently as "the hottest, fastest-growing segment of today's media marketplace," consist largely of corporate press releases, canned stories from public relations firms, heartening reports about uplifted employee morale, and flattering lengthy profiles of local businessmen. Even the "liberal" *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and *Time* magazine as well, often run articles that the mothers of the protagonists must love. Meanwhile, the media for years laid off now classic stories like the smoking/cancer connection and food contamination. The biggest story of all, automobile safety, never showed up until a nonjournalist, Ralph Nader, broke it with *Unsafe at Any Speed*. Tobacco, food, and automobile companies make up the established order, so they are usually left alone.

TV network news reinforces the message: if much of TV news is stereotypical, shallow, and stupid, it's no accident. TV news, like TV fiction, features heroes, villains, clear dangers, simple plots, plenty of pictorial action, and final outcomes. The producers of TV news—the very phrase says a lot—fit the news into these patterns, which conform with current social outlooks.

In a broader sense, TV remains a testament to the American business system. The TV world is upbeat, materialistic, and consumption-prone. Whatever TV says that is nasty about corporate America is subsumed by the overriding assertion of the great desiderata: the products of a consumer society, the pleasures of the packaged good life. The big businessman may be a villain sometimes—on TV, he's got to be a villain or a hero, of course—but his power and perquisites are still envied. And the power of the advertiser, I believe, is greater in TV news than in print journalism: Advertisers can and do remove their sponsorship of TV programs that they don't like.

Why Not the Best

Musing on these considerations that balance the "adversarial" proposition and that highlight the media's influence for continuity over change, leads back to the kind of society we are. In the end, the media have to make their way in the world of commerce. That may lead to many kinds of reporting that we don't like, but it remains the best system. The media so often support the machinery of power because we, their audience, would not have them do otherwise. The press can be much improved despite the conclusion, but still the conclusion stands: We get the kind of press we deserve. ▽

Parts of this article were drawn from a paper that the author presented to a seminar on the press at the Lehrman Institute in New York.

by William Schneider and I. A. Lewis

Views on the News

Whether journalists are or are not a liberal elite, and what difference that makes, has been a hot debate in the United States for the past twenty years. A recent *Los Angeles Times* survey addressed the subject, and it offers some convincing evidence. Newspaper journalists are, indeed, a liberal elite—far more liberal than the general public on a wide range of issues. This fact, however, does not particularly disturb most Americans.

The public gives the news media high marks for professionalism, fairness, accuracy, and reliability, and people perceive no serious left-wing bias in the material they see and read. They do, of course, have complaints about the news media, but these most often relate to abuses of power and to questionable journalistic procedures rather than to any ideological tilt. Americans maintain a healthy skepticism about the news they see and read, but that has as much to do with common sense as with the media's credibility.

Given the highly skewed nature of journalists' opinions, the potential for bias is certainly there. But because of some combination of professionalism on the part of those who report the news, and skepticism—or indifference—on the part of those who consume it, bias is not a major grievance for the public. It is, however, a matter of concern to some specific groups.

The *Los Angeles Times* initially polled 2,993 members of the general public in a nationwide survey taken in February 1985. Each person was asked what newspaper, if any, he or she read most frequently. The *Los Angeles Times* then interviewed 2,703 news and editorial staff members on the 621 papers mentioned. The number of interviews at each paper was proportional to the number of times that newspaper was mentioned by readers. Thus, the sample of journalists is weighted by circulation, with larger, presumably more influential newspapers represented by more interviews. The poll also interviewed the top editor at 587 of the newspapers mentioned by readers. All respondents—the general public, editors, and reporters—were asked the same 106 questions.

One question asked respondents to describe their political views as liberal, conservative, or middle-of-the-road. Another elicited their opinion of Reagan's performance as president. The poll also included a battery of fourteen issue questions covering a range of economic, social, and foreign policy matters. Table 1 shows the opinions of the general public and of newspaper journalists (reporters and editors).

The differences are striking. A majority of the journalists, compared with less than a quarter of the public, call themselves liberals. While the public in our sample includes slightly more conservatives than liberals, among newspaper journalists, liberals outnumber conservatives by over three-to-one. Journalists are, of course, well-educated professionals, a group known to be more socially liberal than the population at large (88 percent of them are college graduates, compared with 16 percent of the general public). But as liberal as they are, are journalists more liberal than other college-educated professionals?

They are. As table 1 reveals, other college-educated professionals are not nearly as liberal as journalists: 23 percent of the public, 38 percent of college-educated professionals, and 55 percent of newspaper journalists describe themselves as liberals. In their opinions of President Reagan, the public and the college-educated professionals are quite close—slightly more than two-to-one favorable on the part of professionals. Newspaper journalists' view of Reagan,

Table 1

	Own View			View of Newspaper Read by:	
	Public	Journalists	College educated professionals	Public	Journalists
Consider self/newspaper					
Liberal	23%	55%	38%	25%	28%
Conservative	29	17	30	24	42
President Reagan					
Favor	56	30	57	29	48
Oppose	27	60	33	9	23
Economic issues					
Sympathize with					
Business	33	27	52	12	42
Labor	32	31	27	8	8
Government regulation of business					
Favor	22	49	26	9	19
Oppose	50	41	57	11	45
Government aid to those unable to support themselves					
Favor	83	95	81	38	69
Oppose	11	3	12	6	8
Government should reduce income inequality					
Favor	55	50	56	16	25
Oppose	23	39	24	4	23
Foreign affairs					
U.S. withdraw investments from South Africa					
Favor	31	62	48	13	22
Oppose	27	29	27	4	18
Verifiable nuclear freeze					
Favor	66	84	79	26	40
Oppose	22	13	17	7	23
CIA aid to Nicaraguan contras					
Favor	19	17	27	7	22
Oppose	44	76	53	14	39
Increase defense budget					
Favor	38	15	32	15	34
Oppose	51	80	63	19	38
Social issues					
Allowing women to have abortions					
Favor	49	82	68	11	43
Oppose	44	14	28	17	13
Prayer in public schools					
Favor	74	25	58	28	23
Oppose	19	67	36	11	42
Affirmative action					
Favor	56	81	67	27	58
Oppose	21	14	20	3	12
Death penalty for murder					
Favor	75	47	67	23	49
Oppose	17	47	26	6	28
Hiring homosexuals					
Favor	55	89	68	13	39
Oppose	31	7	24	7	7
Stricter handgun controls					
Favor	50	78	63	26	47
Oppose	41	19	34	12	22

however, is two-to-one negative. Journalists, it seems clear, are markedly more liberal than others of similar educational and professional standing.

Journalists' liberalism is particularly pronounced on social issues. The public tends to favor the liberal position on affirmative action, gay rights, gun control, and abortion. So do college-educated professionals, by somewhat larger margins. But the opinions of journalists are almost one-sided, ranging from 78-89 percent liberal. Three-quarters of the public and two-thirds of professionals favor the death penalty for murder; journalists split evenly. Both the public and professionals endorse prayer in public schools; journalists oppose it by better than two-to-one. Indeed, 42 percent of newspaper journalists, compared with 18 percent of the public, describe themselves as "non-practicing" in matters of religion.

On each of the six social issues tested, the degree of liberalism increases as one moves from the public to professionals and on to the journalists. The pattern holds up on most foreign policy matters, too, with the public the least liberal, professionals next, and journalists the most liberal on issues such as the nuclear freeze, sanctions against South Africa, and covert aid to the anti-government rebels in Nicaragua.

The pattern breaks down somewhat in the case of economic issues, with professionals on average slightly more conservative than the general public and journalists slightly, but not markedly, more liberal. Table 1 shows that journalists, like the general public, are divided in their sympathies between business and labor; professionals, by contrast, are two-to-one pro-business.

Journalists, however, are much more likely than either the public or professionals to favor government regulation of business. All three constituencies strongly support the idea that government should help people who are unable to support themselves, journalists almost unanimously. On the question of favoring a "government effort to make substantial reductions in the income gap between the rich and the poor," journalists turn out to be more *conservative* than either the public or other professionals. It appears that on questions that affect their interests, as opposed to purely ideological matters, journalists behave like other high-status elites. That is exactly what they are: Almost half of newspaper journalists, but only 18 percent of the general public, have incomes over $40,000.

Thus, what we end up with is an impression of newspaper journalists as something like "super-yuppies." They are emphatically liberal on social issues and foreign affairs, distrustful of establishment institutions (government, business, labor), and protective of their own economic interests. Their partisan affiliation is predominantly independent. In one major respect, however, journalists deviate from this stereotype: In the 1984 election, they voted two-to-one for Walter Mondale.

Asking Readers about Their Newspapers

The people who write and edit news stories are overwhelmingly liberal. But do readers detect any bias when they read their daily newspapers? Not really. Respondents were asked to describe the general political orientation of the newspaper they read most frequently and to characterize how that newspaper "feels about" each of the issues in table 1. The results for the general public and for newspaper journalists appear in the table.

Barely half of the public could categorize the newspaper they read as either liberal or conservative, and they divided evenly between these two characterizations: 25 percent called their newspaper liberal, and 24 percent called it conservative, while 26 percent said it was middle-of-the-road, and the remaining 25 percent were not sure. Responses with that kind of distribution suggest a great deal of uncertainty and confusion.

Less than half, 47 percent, knew how their paper felt about President Reagan. This group did, however, have a definite opinion: By three-to-one, they thought their newspaper supported the president. There was some tendency for people to ascribe their own positions to those of their newspaper. People who supported the president were more likely to see their paper as pro-Reagan. Liberals tended to describe the paper they read as liberal. Conservatives were more likely to see their newspaper as conservative. To some extent, people read newspapers they agree with. But more likely, given the absence of serious newspaper competition in most areas, readers assume that the newspaper they depend on for information shares their outlook.

In either case, newspaper readers do not feel they are being indoctrinated. When asked to describe their paper's position on specific economic, social, and foreign policies, two-thirds, on the average, had no idea. The figures ranged from a low of 17 percent who knew their paper's position on disinvestment in South Africa to a high of 44 percent who could describe whether their paper favored government aid to those unable to support themselves On every issue except abortion, the prevailing view about where newspapers stood was also the prevailing position in public opinion. (A narrow plurality of the public was in favor of allowing women to have an abortion. But those who ventured an assessment believed, by 17 to 11 percent, that the newspaper they read opposed it.)

In terms of either general political orientation or specific issues, there is no evidence that people perceive the newspapers they read as biased strongly to the left. On issues like support for President Reagan, school prayer, and the death penalty, those with an opinion see their newspapers as sharing the public's (more conservative) views, not the prevailing liberalism of the reporters and editors.

On the other hand, does the reader's perception of his or her newspaper represent the reality about the paper? It may be that journalists, being professionals, do not use their work to promote their political views; it could equally well be true that if journalists do inject their views, the public fails to detect any bias. Unperceived biases are difficult to measure through public opinion research; still, there is some evidence in the *Los Angeles Times* study on that point.

Editors as a group were found to be more conservative than reporters, even on newspapers of the same size circulation. Possibly editors, who have a good deal to say about the ideological content of their newspapers, act as gatekeepers against the infusion of liberal biases into news stories. Certainly journalists as a whole do not believe that the newspapers they work for reflect their views. They describe their papers as predominantly conservative, pro-Reagan, pro-business, and only moderately liberal on most social and foreign policy issues.

People were asked whether the news media have treated Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter fairly, made them look better, or made them look worse. The prevailing public view is that Reagan has been treated fairly (43 percent) and more people say the media have made him look better than worse (see table 5). In Jimmy Carter's case, the predominant opinion is that the media made him look worse (47 percent). This fair-to-favorable treatment of Reagan and negative treatment of Carter hardly suggests the existence of a liberal bias in the product.

This study also finds a large proportion of readers who are unable to classify their paper's views. For the issues tested, an average of 54 percent of readers could not describe the position of the newspaper they read most frequently; another 20 percent, on the average,

Table 2
RATINGS OF THE MEDIA

Your own newspaper:	**Public**	**Journalists**
Job it is doing		
Very good	65%	37%
Fairly good	31	60
Bad	3	3
Quality of workers		
Very good	34	44
Fairly good	49	51
Bad	4	4
Bringing to light things the public ought to know		
Very good	45	40
Fairly good	46	54
Bad	8	6
Accuracy		
Very good	39	59
Fairly good	52	40
Bad	7	1
Fairness and impartiality		
Very good	30	53
Fairly good	54	43
Bad	13	4
Local television news:		
Job it is doing		
Very good	51	11
Fairly good	44	60
Bad	5	29
Accuracy		
Very good	50	12
Fairly good	46	67
Bad	3	20
Fairness and impartiality		
Very good	45	16
Fairly good	48	66
Bad	5	16
Network television news:		
Job it is doing		
Very good	43	13
Fairly good	48	65
Bad	4	15
Accuracy		
Very good	37	14
Fairly good	52	67
Bad	4	11
Fairness and impartiality		
Very good	28	12
Fairly good	56	59
Bad	9	21
News media generally:		
Job they are doing		
Very good	30	17
Fairly good	64	78
Bad	5	4
Estimate of public's view of job they are doing		
Very good	16	1
Fairly good	59	38
Bad	8	58
Ideological bias		
Liberal	30	53
Conservative	13	10

said they themselves did not hold strong views on the issues tested. One reason why newspaper readers are satisfied with the viewpoints of their newspapers may be because the issues have little salience for them. If so, it would not matter much to them whether or not the newspaper they read is biased.

Among readers who can describe their newspapers' views, about half say their answers are based on news coverage, and about half say they are based on editorial statements. But in neither case is it widely believed that newspapers are promoting liberalism.

It would be unrealistic to conclude that journalists' biases have no impact on their work. There are all sorts of subtle, unconscious, ways that journalists' values affect their professional performance—their choice of subjects, for instance, or the kinds of sources they find credible. The data here suggest that newspapers take fairly balanced editorial positions, and that the public is largely unaware of whatever bias might exist in news coverage. The poll neither proves nor disproves that such bias exists. What it reveals is that, as a result of journalistic professionalism, editorial balance, and readers' indifference, the public does not feel seriously aggrieved about it.

Rating What's Read and Watched

Is the public satisfied with the professional performance of the press? By and large, yes. Table 2 shows how respondents rated their newspapers, the local television news programs they watch most frequently, network news, and the news media as a whole ("television and the newspapers and magazines and radio"). Offered a four-point rating scale—very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad—few gave any of the media a negative rating in any area. In the case of the newspapers they read, for example, the ratio of positive to negative ratings among the public was 96 to 4 for overall performance, 83 to 4 for the quality of the people who work there, 91 to 8 for bringing to light things the public ought to know, 91 to 7 for accuracy, and 84 to 13 for impartiality. Since bad ratings were so rare, the principal variations occurred in the proportions who gave "very good" and "fairly good" ratings.

Almost two-thirds of the public believed their own newspaper was doing a very good job. This rating was markedly higher than the 37 percent of newspaper journalists who felt the same way. The prevailing opinion among journalists was that their newspapers were doing a fairly good job. Like workers in any industry, journalists feel that their job is done reasonably well, but that it could be done better. Journalists tend to give their papers higher ratings on specific areas of performance—accuracy, impartiality, investigative skill, and the quality of newspaper workers (in other words, themselves).

This does not mean that the public is dissatisfied. It means that people lack the information to give unqualified high ratings. (For that matter, even journalists are far from exorbitant in their self-praise.) When asked to evaluate things they have limited knowledge of—the accuracy, fairness, and competence of newspapers—the public is inclined to be slightly skeptical, but not nega-

Table 3
ETHICS

	Public	Journalists
Characterization of journalism in America		
Essentially ethical	23%	24%
Basically ethical, but needs some improvements	45	71
Basically unethical	17	4
News media . . .		
Abuse the power of the press	40	15
Use this privilege in a responsible way	49	81

Table 4
MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT

	Public	Journalists
How to handle abuses of freedom of the press		
Media should regulate themselves	47%	79%
Make it easier for media to be sued for libel	21	6
Media should be regulated by government	17	0
Limit news media access to government records and files		
Favor	45	11
Oppose	33	88
Allow government official to prevent media from publishing or broadcasting a story seen as inaccurate		
Favor	33	1
Oppose	50	98
Require a reporter to reveal confidential sources if a court determines the information would provide evidence in a criminal trial		
Favor	45	9
Oppose	38	86
Allow military to bar news media from a foreign military operation		
Favor	39	8
Oppose	42	89
Permit courts to fine news media for publishing or broadcasting biased or inaccurate stories		
Favor	52	17
Oppose	23	78

tive. "Newspapers seem to be doing a fairly good job in these areas," the typical respondent says, "but what do I really know?" In the one area the public *is* competent to judge—the kind of job the newspaper is doing—the ratings are much stronger.

Note that, while 65 percent of the public say the newspaper they read does a very good job, the figure is 51 percent for the local television news they watch, 43 percent for network television news, and 30 percent for the news media generally. A familiarity factor appears to be at work here. As a rule, people give their own congressman higher ratings than "Congress" as an institution. They like the company they work for but distrust business as a whole. They have little confidence in government but have high praise for the agencies and officials they have dealt with. When it comes to the press, people are very familiar with the newspaper that lands on their front porch every day. Television, particularly network television, is more remote. "The media" represents a distant and abstract force, and people are reluctant to offer unqualified praise for powerful institutions that are removed from their daily experience.

Thus, the public thinks the news media as a whole are doing a fairly good job, and they believe most people feel that way. Journalists agree that the media are doing a fairly good job. But most journalists hold the opinion that the public has a negative view of the media. It just isn't true.

Table 2 suggests that people see the media as more liberal than the newspaper they read. By 30 to 13 percent, the public describes the news media as liberal, whereas opinion was evenly divided in the case of their own newspaper. There is an even sharper discontinuity in the opinions of journalists. Newspaper staff members tended to rate their own newspapers as conservative, 42 to 28 percent. But they described the news media as liberal by 53 to 10 percent. Apparently, evaluations of the news media are based on factors other than people's experiences with the product.

When people think of the media, they probably think of a powerful institution, the role it plays in society, and the kind of people who work for it, as opposed to specific newspapers or television programs or news stories. People perceive more of a liberal bias in the media as an institution than in the news it produces. When people were asked which institution is the most liberal politically (see table 6), the news media came out ahead of business, government, and even organized labor.

Comparing Media Surveys

In fact, left-wing bias is not one of the public's principal criticisms of the press. In December 1984 and January 1985, MORI Research, Inc. conducted a survey of newspaper credibility for the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE). The results were generally quite favorable to the press.

Roughly 20 percent of those interviewed described either their daily newspaper or television news as biased. Over 60 percent felt that news reporters try to be as objective as possible and that news coverage is independent of advertisers and special interests. By 58 to 42 percent, respondents felt that most news media are careful to separate fact from opinion. When asked to evaluate their daily newspaper and television news, 25 percent in both cases felt they mixed facts and opinion, and 17 percent described them as "opinionated." Most revealing of the public's attitudes was the 64 percent who felt that "although there is some bias in the news media, the average person has enough sources of news to be able to sort out the facts."

As in the *Los Angeles Times* survey, both newspapers and television were given very positive ratings for the quality and reliability of their coverage. Across a range of issues—local news, crime, the economy, President Reagan, business news, elections—majorities or near majorities labeled media coverage "reliable," while fewer than 20 percent called it "unreliable." Only in the case of foreign news—coverage of the Soviet Union, the Arab countries, Israel, and Latin America—was the public "not sure," which is undoubtedly a sensible assessment.

In conflicts between the press and the government, the press always came out ahead. The public rejected arguments that "the press often gets in the way" so that public officials can't do their jobs, that the government has a right to demand access to a reporter's notes and files and that "confidentiality is more important for doctors and clergy than it is for journalists." By about three-to-two, people felt that "the media are usually careful to be responsible" and that "it is important to have a free press even when the press acts irresponsibly."

So what's the beef? Negativism was one complaint. About two-thirds in the ASNE survey criticized the media for overdramatizing the news, stressing bad news too much, and "putting too much emphasis on what is wrong with America and not enough on what is right." As table 5 shows, however, the *Los Angeles Times* survey found that few people want the media to be less critical of major institutions like government or business or religion. In all three cases, majorities thought the media should "continue to be as critical as they are now."

The strongest complaints in the ASNE survey had to do with journalistic techniques and procedures. Strong majorities felt that certain types of news should never be published—exit polls saying who will win an election, secret documents dealing with national security issues, the names of CIA spies, photographs that invade people's privacy. The public also disapproved of secretly recording conversations, having reporters fail to identify themselves or pose as something other than reporters, paying people for information, and quoting sources who cannot be identified. Over 70 percent of those polled felt that a person's right to a fair trial is more important than the public's right to be informed, and that the news media often make people look guilty before they are tried in court.

It should come as no surprise that the public neither understands, nor is committed to, journalistic procedures the way professionals are. The prevailing view in public opinion is that journalism in America is "basically ethical, but needs some improvement" (see table 3). As it happens, that is also the prevailing view among journalists. A substantial minority of the public, however—40 percent—feel that the news media abuse their power. How should these abuses be handled? Surprisingly, the public agrees with professional journalists: The media should regulate themselves, rather than be subject to more government regulation or stronger court sanctions (see table 4).

Table 5

MEDIA NEGATIVISM

	Public	Journalists
Should news media be more critical, less critical, or as critical as they are now when they report about . . .		
Government activities and officials		
More critical	20%	28%
Less critical	16	3
Church activities and officials		
More critical	16	37
Less critical	21	3
Business activities and officials		
More critical	26	47
Less critical	11	2
Have news media treated . . . fairly or have they made him look better than he is or worse than he is?		
Made Ronald Reagan look		
Better	30	34
Worse	18	12
Made Jimmy Carter look		
Better	16	6
Worse	47	46

Table 6

COMPARISON OF INSTITUTIONS

	Public	Journalists
Highest standards of honesty and integrity		
News media	43%	83%
Business	13	3
Organized labor	9	1
Government	15	2
Most liberal politically		
News media	36	31
Business	11	1
Organized labor	23	62
Government	15	2
Highest standards of fairness and impartiality		
News media	44	88
Business	13	2
Organized labor	11	1
Government	17	4
Has done most to promote the public good		
News media	38	55
Business	16	6
Organized labor	12	4
Government	22	22
Should have its power cut back for the good of the country		
News media	6	1
Business	14	17
Organized labor	26	12
Government	37	37

The public understands freedom of the press as a practical, not a professional, issue. Table 4 reveals that the public is willing to compromise freedom of the press when there is a compelling justification for doing so: the classification of some government records, presumably for national security purposes; the exposure of confi-

(Continued on page 58)

by Burns W. Roper and Thomas A. W. Miller

Americans Take Stock of Business

At the beginning of this year, the noted columnist David Broder asked his readers to make their own guesses on the "unanticipated reversal of 1985." He added, "I know what mine would be—an upsurge in anti-business sentiment."

But as the year draws to a close, public attitudes toward business—big and small—have hardly ever been better. In fact, of a dozen major institutions in American society, only the churches are now held in higher esteem—and by only a slight margin (see table 1).

Table 1

ATTITUDES ABOUT INSTITUTIONS

Question: Here is a list of some of the major institutions and organizations in our society. (Card shown respondent) Would you read down that list, and for each one tell me, generally speaking, whether your opinion is highly favorable, moderately favorable, not too favorable, or rather unfavorable?

	Favorable*
The churches	88%
The police	86
Business and industry	86
The higher education system	79
The television press	77
The daily printed press	76
The medical care system	66
The public school system	66
The Supreme Court	64
The Congress	64
The court system	52
Labor unions	49

Note: * Favorable = "Highly favorable" + "Moderately favorable."

Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-4), March 23-30, 1985.

Included in a recent Roper survey were some of the most venerable American institutions: the public school system, the police, the Supreme Court, Congress, and the press, among others. Besides the churches, only the police received a highly favorable rating similar to that of business and industry, but the police also came in for somewhat more criticism than business.

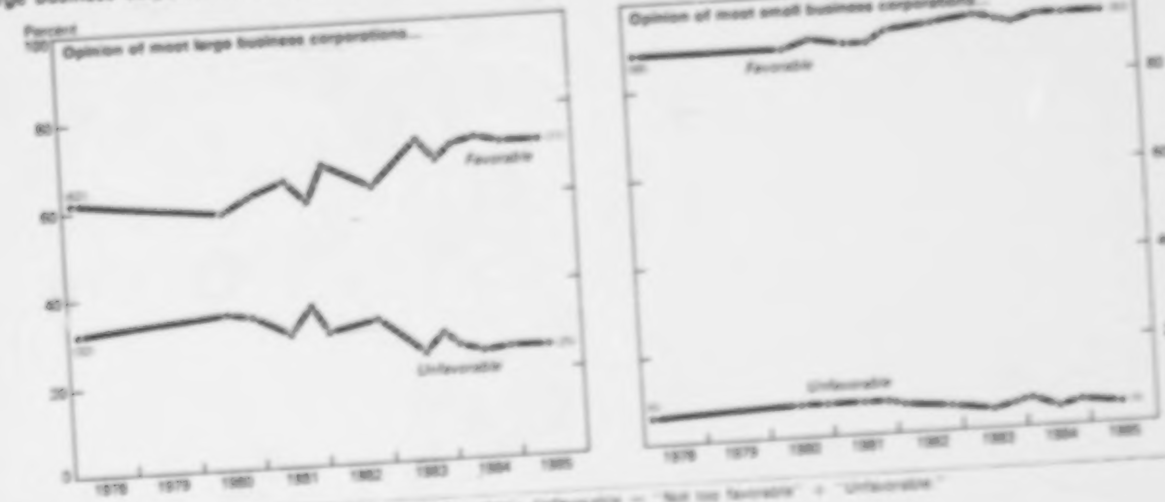
These results supplement other Roper findings that suggest Americans appreciate, more and more, the beneficial role that business plays in our society. The public has long been especially supportive of small enterprises, for instance, with overwhelming majorities expressing positive attitudes toward them. Today, fully 93 percent have a highly or moderately favorable opinion of small companies—up from an already dizzying 88 percent in 1978 (see figure 1).

While they generally provoke more negative feelings, large corporations are also currently basking in the warm rays of public approval. Again, the contrast with the late 1970s is instructive. In 1978 a third of the public held not too favorable or *un*favorable views of big companies, and this percentage stayed relatively constant over the following two years. Now, however, only a quarter of the population hold such critical opinions. Over the same period, large corporations' favorable ratings have risen significantly, from 62 percent to 71 percent (see figure 1).

Yet do these facts mean that business's position is now unassailable? That its image is untarnishable? That Mr. Broder was wrong not only in his timing but also in his basic analysis? To answer these questions, one must first explore the reasons behind business's un-

Figure 1

Question: Now, turning to another subject, what is your opinion *of most large business corporations?* There are many exceptions, of course, but would you say your perception of most large business corporations is highly favorable, or moderately favorable, or not too favorable, or rather unfavorable? Again, there may be exceptions, but would you say your opinion of *most small business companies* is highly favorable, or moderately favorable, or not too favorable, or rather unfavorable?



Note: Favorable = "Highly favorable" + "Moderately favorable"; Unfavorable = "Not too favorable" + "Unfavorable."
Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization, latest that of June 8-15, 1985.

deniable popularity today.

Reasons for the Glow

A good starting point is the faith that the American people have in their economic system. While much of this faith is no doubt ideological and reflexive in nature, it nevertheless provides the solid foundation of confidence on which American business is established.

In 1977—after Watergate and before Jimmy Carter's malaise speech—we asked Americans which of nine items had been "the major reason for our high standard of living." The primary reason, cited by 60 percent of the public, was "our free enterprise system," which handily beat the other items such as America's natural resources, our system of public education, hard work, or the availability of credit for the average person. Moreover, at that time our free enterprise system was also credited by 59 percent of the public as being "one of the major causes of United States greatness"—second only to the Constitution and our form of government (which received the vote of 66 percent).

Today, 58 percent of the public agree that "what's good for business is good for the average person." This proportion has remained virtually unchanged since we first asked the question in 1981. And probably the most notable feature of this result is that essentially similar majorities of all Americans—young and old, white collar and blue collar, liberal and conservative—concur with the proposition. The only true dissenters are black Americans, with 22 percent disagreeing and another 31 percent having mixed feelings about the coincidence of interests between business and the average person.

This fundamental belief in the soundness of the American economic system inevitably conditions the way in which Americans view business. As the most visible representation of the economy in action, business receives most of the plaudits for prosperity. Perhaps this is why business has consistently been judged more favorably than unfavorably in recent years when it is considered *as an institution.*

The link between the economy and business also largely explains the exceptionally favorable public attitude toward business at the moment. The strength of the economy, which until early this year was booming along in the best recovery in postwar history, has been a determining force. Nineteen eighty-four, it should be remembered, was a banner year for most Americans, with personal incomes up and inflation way down. And 1985, although less remarkable, has thus far seen a psychological continuation of last year's economic success.

The public mood may not be affected solely by the pocketbook, but a full rather than an empty wallet obviously helps. On numerous occasions we have documented that when Americans are feeling particularly well off, they feel better about almost everything—not simply about business in general, but also about completely unrelated things like how they treat their children, how their parents treated them, how their automobiles are functioning, and so on. Business just happens to be one of the prime beneficiaries of this upbeat public mood.

Of course, other influences should be taken into account. The administration's strong pro-business stance has undoubtedly swayed public opinion to some extent. Certain companies—one thinks of the automobile industry—have made concerted efforts to improve product quality and pay more attention to consumer demands. Others have stressed their human dimension. And it may well be that Americans, as a whole, realize more than ever that they are living in a highly competitive world—and that our businesses are the best defense against foreign inroads. This point was probably driven home during the 1982 recession, when massive job losses provoked heightened awareness (somewhat ironically) of the job-creating role of business in the face of stiff competition.

Yet the state of the economy is probably the key. Major changes in the public's attitude toward business will most likely await an equally major change in economic conditions.

Reason for Criticism

This said, however, it should not be simplistically assumed that business's image is vulnerable only to the next recession. If the public respects business for the jobs it produces, for the quality of the products and services it delivers, for the innovation and efficiency it introduces to the economy, the public also mistrusts many ways that business behaves.

Despite the generally pro-business mood of the country, opinion concerning government regulation or oversight of business has not tilted much in business's favor. The rhetoric of the Reagan administration notwithstanding, there is little evidence that Americans desire a radically different balance of power between government and business—at least when it comes to specific aspects of business behavior.

In March this year, we asked the public whether business could be counted on to do seven things on its own, or whether the government should keep a sharp eye on business to make sure they are accomplished. For six of the seven, clear majorities said that the government has a definite role to play as ombudsman: making sure that pollution gets cleaned up (85 percent), that price-fixing is avoided (80 percent), that products and services are safe (76 percent), that business advertises honestly (69 percent), that safe working conditions are provided (78 percent), and that fair employment practices are followed (60 percent). Only on investing money in new product development did few (29 percent) see a need for a governmental watchdog role.

This finding supports other results indicating that, on balance, the public believes government regulation to be beneficial. While people acknowledge that regulations in general raise prices and burden companies with unnecessary paperwork, they also feel that the rules serve a larger interest. In fact, even as pro-business sentiment has grown, there has been a subtle reaction in attitudes toward regulation. In August 1984, 56 percent of Americans felt that government regulations were not being enforced strictly enough, up 8 percentage points from four years earlier (see table 2).

Table 2

GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

Question: Taking everything into account, in general, would you say that government regulations . . .

Improved the safety of products that are sold	
Have	75%
Have not	17
Resulted in higher prices, or lower prices, for regulated products	
Higher prices	73
Lower prices	6
Reduced the use of unsafe products and ingredients	
Have	65
Have not	23
Burdened companies with unnecessary red tape and paper work	
Have	60
Have not	22
Reduced pollution	
Have	57
Have not	33
Been enforced too strictly, or not strictly enough*	
Too strictly	10
Not strictly enough	56

Note: * "About right (vol.)" = 22%.

Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 84-8), August 11-18, 1984.

The Bad News

Business, despite its current popularity, has clearly not received a *carte blanche* from the public. Furthermore, some recent, well-publicized events have shown that there are cracks in the surface of business's support. Perhaps the best example has been the spate of white collar crimes, notably the convictions of E. F. Hutton & Co. for fraud and of Paul Thayer, former undersecretary of the Navy, for insider trading.

In June we asked Americans whether they had heard of these cases and, if so, whether the sentences handed down were too easy, too hard, or about right. Fifty-seven percent knew of the Hutton case, and 38 percent said they were familiar with the Thayer case. Of these people, clear pluralities said that the punishment—the fine imposed on Hutton, the jail term given Thayer—was too lenient. Forty-five percent believed that Hutton got off too easily, compared to a mere 3 percent who thought that the fine was too stiff; 37 percent felt the Hutton penalty was about right (see table 3). Thayer fared about the same.

Examining the results by demographic subgroups yields one striking fact. The Americans who are generally most up-to-date on the news and most involved in public affairs—those we call the "political/social actives"—were particularly critical of the penalty that Hutton received. Eighty percent of the politically and socially active knew about the Hutton case, and fully half of these knowledgeable ones considered the punishment to be too lenient.

The verdict of these politically aware Americans should be cause for some concern to business. In the first place, they are often trendsetters—people whose ideas and beliefs typically influence the general public. And second, in the Hutton case, a company, not an individual, was on trial. A business, not a businessman, was fined.

Table 3

Question: Here is a list of court cases that have been in the news recently. (Card shown respondent) Would you please read down that list and tell me which ones you have read or heard about? . . . (Asked for each one read or heard about) Do you think the decision made in the (Thayer/Dotson/E.F. Hutton/Gilbert) case was too easy on the defendant, or too hard on the defendant, or was just about the right decision?

	Informed respondents			
	Decision was too easy on the defendant	Too hard	About right	Don't know
The release of Gary Dotson in the rape case in Chicago (82% heard/read about)	20%	15%	50%	17%
The life sentence given Roswell Gilbert for killing his terminally ill wife in Florida (67% heard/read about)	9	49	25	16
The $4 million fine imposed on E. F. Hutton for mail and wire fraud* (57% heard/read about)	45	3	37	14
The 4-year jail term given former Undersecretary of the Navy Paul Thayer for insider trading (38% heard/read about)	42	3	37	21

Note: *We must confess we made an error here. When we asked the public about the Hutton case, we specified a $4 million fine instead of the $2 million actually imposed. Thus, we ended up treating Hutton more harshly than did the courts. We do not think, however, that this error greatly affected the public's response to the question. If anything, the percentage saying that the decision in the Hutton case was too easy would probably have gone up had we cited the actual $2 million fine instead of $4 million.

Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-6), June 8-15, 1985.

Lest this seem like an isolated example, other evidence indicates a growing suspicion of business's behavior today. The allegations of waste and fraud that have been leveled at defense contractors have provoked some public backlash—again, especially among influential Americans, the political/social actives. For the first time, a plurality of political/social actives (46 percent) held not too favorable or unfavorable views of General Dynamics, for example, compared to only 37 percent with a favorable opinion. This was the *only* instance of a negative rating for the ten major corporations we asked about. Another company involved in a defense procurement case, General Electric, did not come in for the same kind of public criticism. Despite pleading guilty to numerous counts of overbilling the government, GE's favorable rating among the general public stood at 79 percent in June, compared to only 16 percent who were critical. Even among the political/social actives, GE received quite a positive rating: 75 percent favorable, 23 percent unfavorable. The explanation probably lies in GE's strong identification with consumer products and appliances, not defense supplies, whereas General Dynamics is perceived as being much more deeply involved in the defense business.

To be fair, among the severest critics of business misbehavior are business people themselves. Executives and professionals thought that Hutton got off too lightly with its fine—more so than the general public. And more executive/professionals were critical of General Dynamics. In both cases, it could certainly be argued that business itself, as an institution, keeps a careful, probing eye on its members' transgressions.

Do these instances of business malfeasance, and the public's reaction to them, portend a more far-reaching change in public opinion? Is an upswing in antibusiness sentiment, as Mr. Broder speculated, really on the horizon?

Shifts in Public Opinion

None of the data we have seen could be interpreted as a harbinger of a massive swing in attitudes against business. While Americans may grow increasingly critical of specific cases of business misdoings, those misdoings are not so widespread as to incite deep popular antipathy.

But the fundamental truth is that the public (or most of it at least) didn't hate business ten years ago and doesn't love business now. The public's attitudes toward business, as well as toward government and labor—and the delicately balanced tripod that the three of them represent—are complex and ambivalent.

Consciously or subconsciously, people look at any two legs of the business-labor-government tripod to balance—to hold in check—the potential excesses of the other: government and business to control labor, labor and government to check business, business and labor to balance government. People don't want government to run much of anything, but they do want government to *monitor* private enterprise. In a word, our system of checks and balances applies not only to the political sphere but equally to the economic one.

At the moment, Americans see business as a lesser economic danger than government or labor—which helps explain why their attitudes toward business are so favorable. Yet the danger is that business might overinterpret its current mandate from the people—that it will assume it has an unqualified license to do exactly what it wants. It may imagine that if some public policy is not good for business, it automatically is not good for America. These are the dangers of growing arrogance and insensitivity on the part of business as it enjoys its comfortable environment—the kind of arrogance that both labor and government developed after the public embraced them in the 1930s and 1940s to combat the excesses of business.

Nothing dictates that such danger cannot successfully be avoided. But if history is any guide, the probability is that, eventually, a kind of brashness in the business world will emerge—as arrogance recedes in labor and government—causing the public pendulum to swing back in another direction. Maybe not today, perhaps not tomorrow—but almost certainly sometime in the future. So Mr. Broder's prediction will not be fulfilled this year. But only his timing, and not his thesis, is wrong.

by Humphrey Taylor

Healing the Health Care System

Ronald Reagan's recent bout with cancer illustrates nicely what is right about American medical care, and points to one of its problems. By his doctors' accounts, Reagan is a good advertisement for the recent trend toward good health and physical vigor: He is one of the new practitioners of preventive medicine. His own fortitude, coupled with today's move toward shorter hospital stays, helped him to get back on his feet and back on the ranch surprisingly quickly. Yet, at age seventy-four, the president is also within a year of belonging to the fastest growing age group in the country. As a member of that group, statistics say that he is likely to require expensive—and possibly extensive—medical care in the future. In his case, we don't worry about who will pay for it; in the case of ordinary mortals, there is some cause for concern.

Historians looking back on the 1980s will report that the nation's health care system was profoundly changed during this decade. They will note an explosion in the number of practicing physicians; marked improvements in our ability to prolong life through both better prevention and the use of new medical technologies and therapies; increasing competition among health care providers; fundamental changes in delivery of health care services and in the institutions that deliver them; and a revolution in the way that health care services are sold and paid for. They may also be able to note that—after years of escalating health care costs—private sector costs were brought under control. And, if they are perceptive, they will report that the public's behavior, attitudes, and expectations about health care providers also shifted dramatically.

Some things have not changed, including our priorities. Americans want a health care system that provides first-rate care with a human face, that is accessible to everyone, including the old and the poor, and that is affordable. Quality, accessibility, and cost are the three key criteria.

Over the years public perceptions of the health system's strengths and weaknesses have changed a great deal. One of the few constants, though, has been a continuing belief in the excellence of American health care. The many surveys on the subject have all shown that most people are satisfied with the health care they receive from doctors and hospitals. Perhaps one should add that definitions of quality are idiosyncratic, so that a good bedside manner may be more important than scientific expertise in communicating an aura of quality. But for most Americans, the caliber of our health care services has never been a major issue, at least not since polls started to measure these things.

In the 1950s and 1960s the main criticism was the cost of care to individual patients and the resulting low level of access to health care services. Without public or private sector insurance coverage, most Americans were financially at risk from the heavy costs of accidents, disease, or old age—particularly where they had to bear the expense of major surgery, prolonged hospitalization, or nursing home care. And without insurance to pick up the tab, hospital costs and doctor fees were limited to what patients could afford to pay.

This was not a uniquely American problem, but

Figure 1

PERCENTAGE SEEING PHYSICIAN IN LAST TWELVE MONTHS

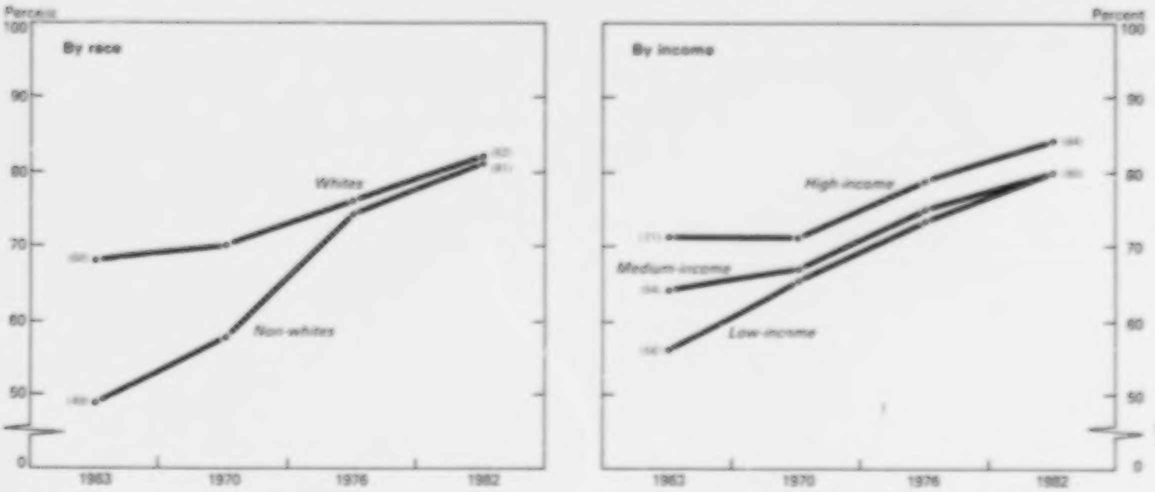
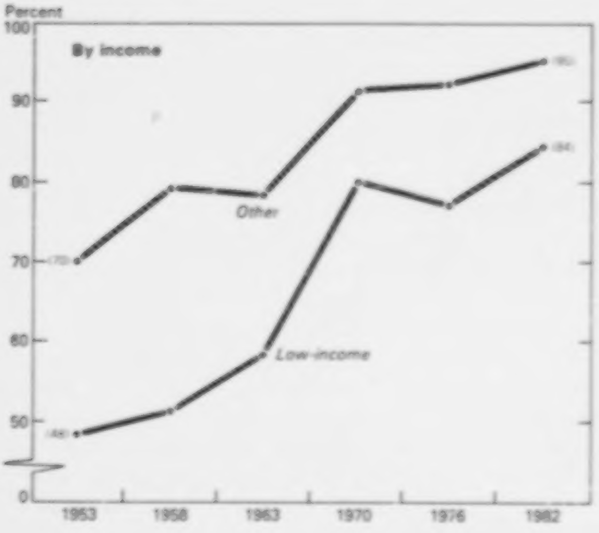


Figure 2

PEOPLE WITH THIRD-PARTY MEDICAL COVERAGE



Source: Surveys by the Center for Health Administration Studies, University of Chicago, 1953-1967 and by Louis Harris and Associates, 1982 for The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

America's response was unique. Every other Western industrial country brought in a national health service or some kind of national health insurance to provide more or less universal coverage. In this country, the problems were addressed by the rapid growth of employer-provided and privately purchased health insurance, the introduction of Medicare for the elderly and the disabled, and Medicaid for the poor.

These programs worked. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's National Access surveys have, since 1953, measured the percentages of people seeing a physician in the previous twelve months and the numbers of people with third-party insurance coverage for medical expenses (see figures 1 and 2). While the sharpest improvements occurred after Medicare and Medicaid were introduced, each succeeding measurement continued to improve. Furthermore, the gaps that existed between higher and lower income groups and between whites, blacks, and other minorities diminished sharply. In the most recent National Access survey (1982), we found that only 5 percent of all American families had one or more members who had failed to obtain care that they thought they needed in the previous twelve months.

We still do not provide universal access to health care services, and we are unlikely to do so any time soon. The 1982 National Access study found that 8 percent of all adults—18.6 million people—had no health insurance, and many of those with some insurance were clearly inadequately covered for major medical expenses or long-term hospitalization. But for the great majority, access to care was no longer a problem. Yet the growth of public and private sector health insurance solved one set of problems only to create new ones. We have come a long way since the 1950s, but at a very high price.

From Old Problems to New Ones

There seems to be no limit to the demand for health care services if the supply is not rationed by price or availability. We would all like to have access to health care services of presidential quality. The fundamental flaw in the health care system as it developed in the sixties and seventies was that, far from limiting the almost infinite demand for health care services, the system positively encouraged it. The only people who might have limited the demand, apart from the patients themselves, were the physicians and the hospital administrators, and they both had a vested interest in expanding it. To be successful, hospitals had to fill their beds, surgeons to practice more surgery, and doctors to provide more treatment. The general assumption was, and probably still is, that "more is better" for the health of the consumer, and no doubt it usually was. The unfettered fee-for-service system of the 1960s and 1970s not only allowed for an explosion in the use of health care services, it also provided no real check on the prices of these services. The cost of whatever the doctors and specialists told us was necessary was just passed through, not so much to the patient as to the taxpayers, employers, and consumers of the employers' products. No wonder that for many physicians and health care providers "the journal" now means not the *New England Journal of Medicine*, but the *Wall Street Journal*.

Defenders of this unfettered fee-for-service system told us we had a free, competitive market for health care services. But only 16 percent (in 1983) of Americans have ever chosen a doctor because his or her fees were lower than those of another doctor. So price sensitivity played almost no role in this market.

In the mid-1970s we discovered that we had a new crisis in health care, a crisis of cost, and that was not so much the cost to the individual, but the cost to society. Growing awareness of this killed support for national health insurance, which was a solution to the old problem—access—not to the new one. National health insurance, many people believed, would benefit relatively few but would impose an additional tax burden on many.

By 1982 only 19 percent of all adult Americans felt that the health care system was working "pretty well"; 47 percent thought that fundamental changes were needed, while 28 percent thought that there was so much wrong that it needed to be completely rebuilt (see table 1). At first blush these results are puzzling, and they apparently contradict the overwhelming satisfaction with health care services Americans had expressed for so many years.

Table 1

VIEWS OF THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Question: Which of the following statements comes closest in expressing your overall view on the American health care system?

	1982	1983	1984
On the whole, the health care system works pretty well, and only minor changes are necessary to make it work better	19%	21%	26%
There are some good things in our health care system, but fundamental changes are needed to make it work better	47	50	49
The American health care system has so much wrong with it that we need to completely rebuild it	28	25	21

Source: Surveys by Louis Harris and Associates for the Kaiser Family Foundation, latest that of August-October 1984.

The issue, of course, was cost. While many people may not have understood what was happening to the economics of health care, they were shocked by the escalation of hospital charges and doctors' fees, whether or not they paid bills themselves. When asked in open-ended questions what was wrong with our health care system, most people talked about costs, inflation, and affordability. But they didn't wish to roll back the system that had created the explosion of health care expenditures. Medicare and Medicaid have always been among the most popular of all government services (along with social security, law enforcement, and education); most people feel we should spend more, not fewer, tax dollars on these favorites. The issue is not what we spend, but what we get for our money.

While all but a tiny minority of Americans are true believers in the benefits of competition, they are aware that there is little of it among hospitals or doctors. (Curiously, doctors are the only group of many we have surveyed who believe that we already have a competitive system.) If there is no price rivalry, regulation is one way to deal with the high costs. No wonder that, whenever they have been asked, large majorities of the public have favored government price controls—particularly of hospitals, but also of doctors.

Curbing Costs

Price controls, however, are not the only method for containing health care costs, and America has been ingenious in thinking up a large number of mechanisms for both the public and the private sectors. Many of these policies are now being tested, and in the last three years they have already substantially slowed the increasing cost and utilization (overutilization ?) of health care services. As a foreign observer of the American policy formation process, I am constantly reminded of the wisdom of Winston Churchill's remark that "Americans can always be relied upon to do the right thing—after they have exhausted all the other possibilities." Only when a problem has become big enough and the crisis is at hand is it possible to develop the consensus necessary for making tough decisions, enacting new legislation, or (as in this case) requiring some sacrifices from both health care consumers and providers.

There are many approaches to health care cost containment. We have prospective payments for specific conditions—the so-called diagnosis-related groups or DRGs—for Medicare patients, and increasingly for other patients, too. (Yes, these are a form of government price controls, although they are seldom described as such.) There are all kinds of ways to shift the cost from the insurer to the insured, with the consumer paying a greater share of the premium, a bigger deductible, or a larger part of each medical bill. Alternative delivery systems such as health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and preferred provider organizations (PPOs) are growing explosively—HMO membership by 15-20 percent per year, and PPOs even faster in their first few years.

Health maintenance organizations and prospective payments have one thing in common: They reverse the normal financial incentives for health care providers. In both cases, providers are paid the same amount for treating patients whatever the cost of the treatment, so they have every incentive to keep their costs down. Under the traditional fee-for-service systems, the incentive is to incur as many costs as possible and then pass them along.

Among the more powerful cost containment mechanisms are those aimed at unnecessary hospitalization, including: "utilization reviews"; the use of second opinions from other doctors; requiring prior approval by the insurers before patients are hospitalized for non-emergency treatment; and taking steps to eliminate or reduce the time spent in the hospital for surgery, tests, and treatment.

With the recognition that many costs incurred in treating the sick could have been avoided if the patient had lived a healthier life, we have seen the growth of "wellness programs" and the start of insurance plans that offer incentives for those who do not smoke, who wear seat belts, or who practice other health and safety procedures.

No one of these many policies is a panacea, but the programs that rely on many of them are usually acceptable to most employees and are effective in containing costs.

Acceptance of Change

In a survey conducted for the Equitable Life Assurance Company of the United States early in 1985, we found that large and medium-sized companies surveyed (500 or more employees) had moved a long way in the last three years, introducing many of these new cost-containment mechanisms. Furthermore, most employees found most of these changes acceptable, and most employers were optimistic that the steps they were taking were effective in controlling costs (see table 2).

Since many employers are shifting a significant part of health care costs to their employees, the willingness of most people to go along with these changes is remarkable. Fully 73 percent of employers in large and medium-sized companies say they have changed their health plans a great deal or somewhat over the last few years, and 66 percent say they have increased the cost of health care services to their employees a great deal or somewhat during this time. Yet only 21 percent of those employees who were aware of the changes made by their employers find them "not very" or "not at all" acceptable (see table 3). By a substantial 57 percent to 38 percent majority, employees who are aware that their employers are requiring them to pay a bigger share of their health care costs think it is necessary in order to get their health insurance costs under control. Furthermore, most employers report that it was easier than they thought it would be to gain employee acceptance of increased cost-sharing.

Table 2

HEALTH PLAN CHANGES MADE IN THE LAST THREE YEARS

	Percent of companies (Corporate benefits officers)	**Acceptability to employees affected (Employees)**	**Perceived effectiveness (Corporate benefits officers)**
Changed to contributory plan	21%	68%	71%
Introduced deductibles	24	59	82
Increased deductibles	50	54	82
Introduced co-payments	22	52	81
Increased co-payments	27	48	78
Introduced plans to discourage hospitalization	47	83	81
Introduced pre-admission review	28	73	73
Introduced second opinions	54	84	73
Initiated utilization reviews	27	NA	67
Offered HMO option	34	80	49
Initiated a PPO	9	82	51
Started a wellness program	26	97	67

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for Equitable Life Assurance, February-March 1985.

Table 3

ACCEPTABILITY OF CHANGES IN HEALTH PLANS

Question: Overall, how acceptable have the changes made by your employer been to employees such as yourself—very acceptable, somewhat acceptable, not very acceptable, or not acceptable at all?

	Employees
Very acceptable	34%
Somewhat acceptable	45
Not very acceptable	16
Not acceptable at all	5

Note: Sample = employees whose health plans have been changed "a great deal" or "somewhat."

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for Equitable Life Assurance, February-March 1985.

Employers say that the changes they have made in their health care plans since 1981 have resulted in massive savings. The 73 percent of these employers who have changed their health care plans believe their 1985 health care costs per employee are 17 percent lower than if no such changes had been made. If those estimates are accurate, they represent 1985 savings to corporations of about $12 billion.

Those savings are likely to increase. Employers expect to make even more changes in their health care plans in the next three years. If they do so, by the end of this decade their costs for providing insurance to employees will be rising no faster than the inflation rate. Difficult as it is to believe, we are well on the way to solving the problem of corporate health care cost inflation, if not for Medicare and Medicaid. A sense that the cost problem is now less severe may explain the slight softening of public hostility to the system (see table 1).

In surveys of those affected most directly we found that majorities of all groups except one were generally willing to go along with changes to get health care costs under control. The public (as consumers, taxpayers, and employers), hospital administrators, employers, insurance executives, and labor union leaders said they could accept policies that were not in their narrow, short-term interest. The only group out of step was the doctors. They alone believed (in 1984) that we had a competitive price system, that it worked pretty well, and that we did not need to fix it. They were opposed to HMOs and PPOs and DRGs and any other policy that inhibited their practice of unfettered fee-for-service medicine.

A few years ago, this hostility from the medical profession would have been enough to block most of the reforms, but doctors no longer have veto power. The remarkable thing about this revolution in the way health care services are bought and sold is that it is happening despite the opposition of most doctors. Reluctantly doctors are learning to adapt to these changes. The medical profession's preeminent power to shape our health care system has been sharply eroded.

Dealing with Long-Term Care

Cost containment, however, is not the only major health care issue facing the nation. The biggest and most rapidly growing hole in our insurance system is that we have no national policy for long-term care. Many people believe Medicare will pay for nursing home care when they need it. It doesn't now, and there are no plans for it to do so. While insurers such as Prudential, Metropolitan Life, and Blue Cross/Blue Shield are starting to sell insurance for nursing home care, even the most enthusiastic advocates of private long-term care insurance recognize that only a small minority of the population are likely to buy it.

Nursing home care is paid for by the users themselves, their families, and (when private resources are exhausted) Medicaid. But you have to virtually bankrupt yourself before you can turn to Medicaid. And if a family, by supreme effort, manages to cope with the elderly person at home and keep him or her out of a nursing home, it doesn't qualify for Medicaid. The Medicaid program therefore encourages expensive nursing home care and discourages the less expensive and often more humane and more desirable alternative. But this crisis has not yet reached a critical stage. Most people are unaware of it. The problem is going to get a lot worse before it gets better.

The absence of an efficient long-term care insurance policy is only one of the problems that is aggravated by the aging of the population. The "old old," those over seventy-five, are the fastest growing age group in our population. They are not only more likely to require nursing home care, they are also more likely to need expensive medical treatment. While there will be more healthy older people than ever before in the years ahead, most gerontologists expect a steadily increasing burden of disability as the population becomes further skewed toward the old.

The good news for the elderly, as for everyone else, is that with each passing year there are new and more effective treatments, stemming from the rapid growth of new drugs, therapies, and equipment. But these developments are a divided blessing. Jerry Avon of the Harvard Medical School put it succinctly:

> The remarkable progress in biomedical technologies since World War II has made it possible for physicians to keep sicker and sicker patients alive longer and longer at greater and greater cost. As a result, we are facing an accelerated demand for medical care by a rapidly aging population whose demographic characteristics are unprecedented.

With every passing year, we are facing more difficult moral and ethical problems. Who should get treatment, and who should not? Should it be left to chance, or the marketplace, or the patient, or the physician, or the government to tell us the values we ought to adopt?

In the case of the elderly, the situation is complicated by the sometimes ambiguous consequences of geriatric medicine. Although dramatic recoveries occur frequently and can result in a complete return to normal life, the results are often less clear cut. Patients can recover from massive strokes only to live for years with severe physical and mental disabilities. Those with advanced senile dementia can be saved through careful nursing and round-the-clock care only to live lengthy lives of disorientation and confusion. Certain cancer patients can be subjected to treatments that may add only a few painful and expensive months to their lives. How long do people want to stay alive, in pain, if they are full of tubes and medication? How long do we as their children or spouses or as a society want to keep them alive in this condition? And who's going to pay for it?

Americans may not be well informed about the details of this debate. But they can sense change and react to it. People probably learned most of what they know about the subject from Karen Ann Quinlan's tragedy and the media attention it spawned. Twelve years ago most people were opposed to euthanasia. Now, a 61 percent majority of all Americans believe that terminally-ill patients should have the right to tell their doctor to put them out of their misery (see table 4).

A New Bedside Manner

One of the most subtle shifts going on in our health care system is a slow but steady change in the relationship between doctors and their patients. In a survey for Pfizer Pharmaceuticals in 1984, one hypothesis—that

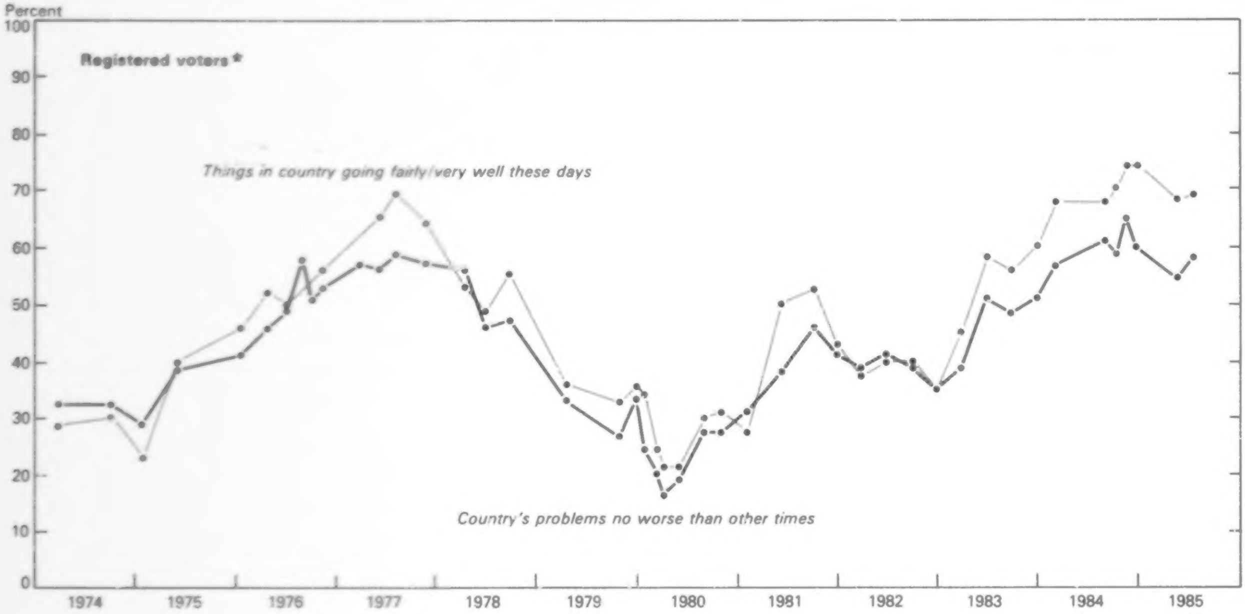
(Continued on page 60)

OPINION ROUNDUP

THE STATE OF THE NATION

Question: How do you feel that things are going in the country these days—very well, fairly well, pretty badly, or very badly?

Question: In commenting on how things are going in the country, some people tell us that the problems we face are no worse than at any other time in recent years. Others say the country is really in deep and serious trouble today. Which comes closest to your own feelings—the fact that: Problems are no worse than at other times. . . . The country is in deep and serious trouble. . . ?

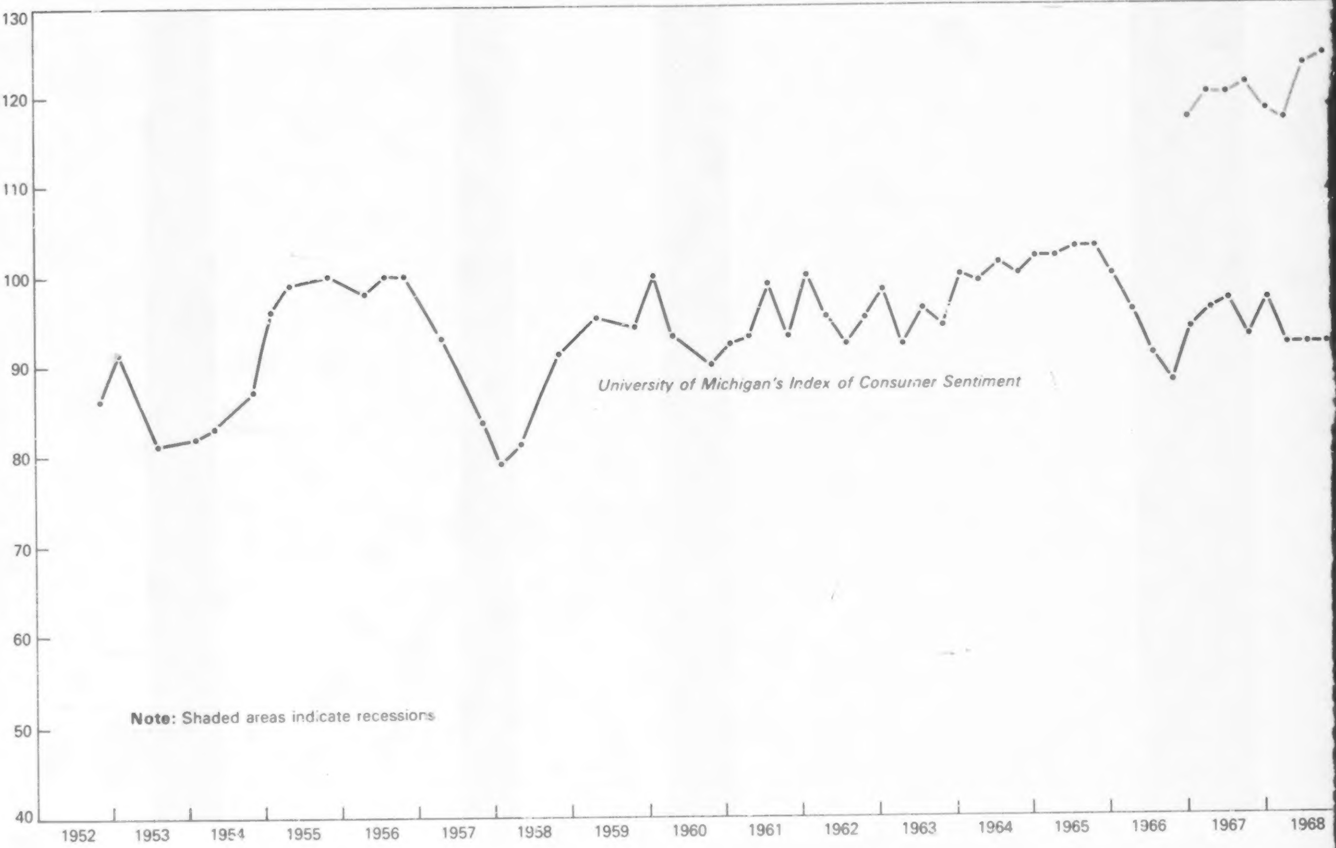


	Problems no worse than other times	Things in country going fairly well/ very well
March 1974	32%	29%
September	32	30
January 1975	29	23
May	38	40
January 1976	41	46
April	46	52
June	49	50
August	58	—
September	51	—
October	53	56
March 1977	57	—
May	56	65
July	59	69
November	57	64
March 1978	56	53
May/June	46	49
October	47	56
April 1979	33	36
October	27	33
December	33%	36%
January 1980	24	34
mid-March	20	24
late March	16	21
May	19	21
August	27	30
October	27	31
January 1981	31	27
May	38	50
September	46	53
December	41	43
March 1982	39	38
June	41	40
October	39	40
December	35	35
March 1983	39	45
June	51	58
September	49	56
December	51	60
February 1984	57	68
August	61	68
September	59	70
October	65	74
December	60	74
May 1985	55	68
July	58	69

Note: All sample sizes were over 1,000, except Jan. 1976 = 951; late March 1980 = 917; and Dec. 1983 = 1,000. *All surveys were of registered voters except March 1974, Sept. 1974, Jan. 1975, May 1975, and Jan. 1976.

Source: Surveys by *Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White, latest that of July 25-27, 1985.

On The Economic



Note: Shaded areas indicate recessions

MICHIGAN INDEX OF CONSUMER SENTIMENT

The Consumer Sentiment Index is a composite number that takes into account the answers to this series of questions:

1. Would you say that you and your family are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?
2. Now, looking ahead—do you think that a year from now you and your family will be better off financially, or worse off, or just about the same?
3. Now, turning to business conditions in the country as a whole—do you think that during the next twelve months, we'll have good times financially or bad times, or what?
4. Looking ahead, which would you say is more likely—that in the country as a whole, we'll have continuous good times during the next five years or so, or that we will have periods of widespread unemployment, or depression, or what?
5. About the big things people buy for their house—I mean furniture, home furnishings, refrigerator, stove, television, and things like that. In general, do you think now is a good time or a bad time to buy such household items?

Note: For data prior to 1962 the base is Fall 1956 = 100. In 1962 and later years, the base is February 1966 = 100, a date selected because the index value on the old base happened to be 100 in February 1966, thus linking the two sets of data.

Source: Survey by Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, latest that of April-June 1985.

CONFERENCE BOARD CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDEX

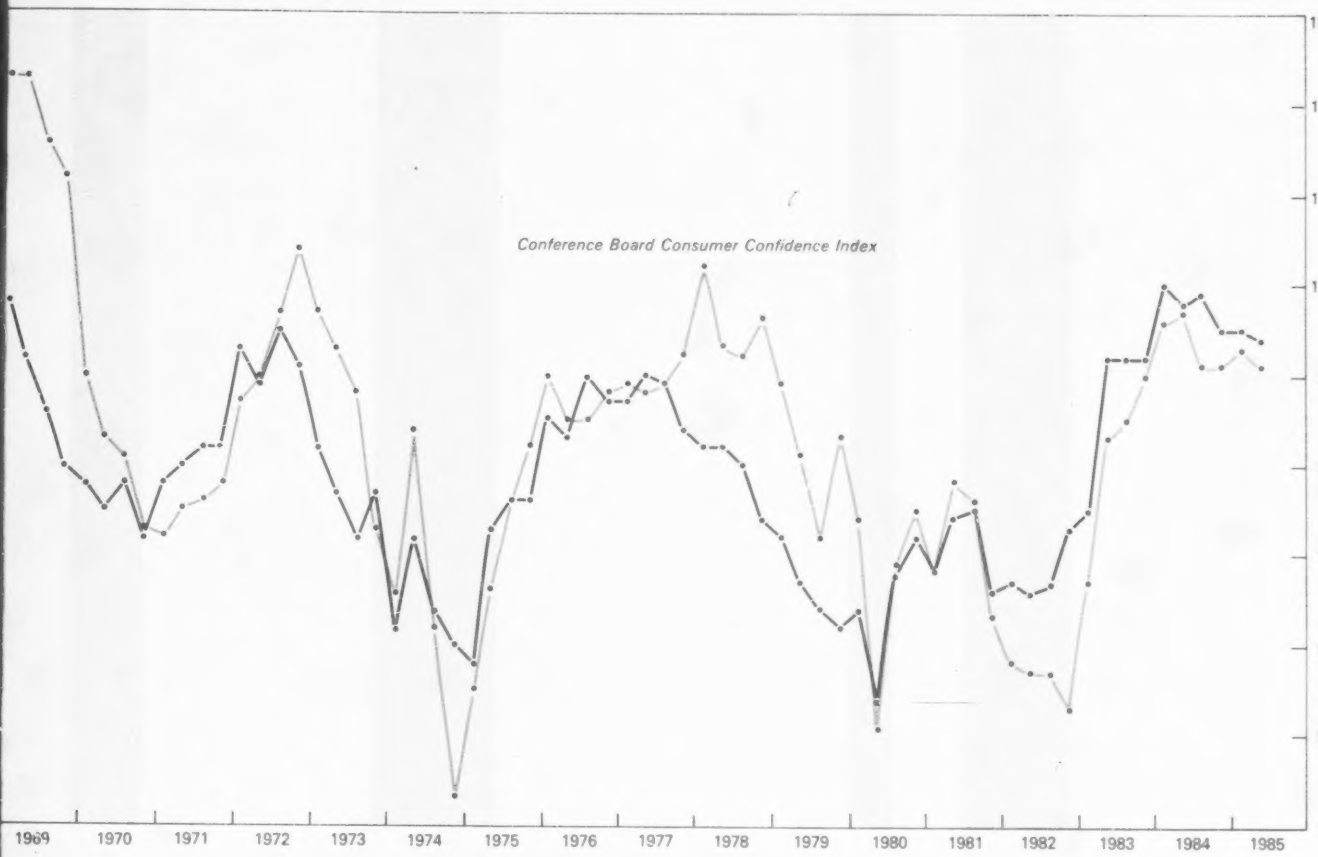
The Consumer Confidence Index is a composite number that takes into account the answers to this series of questions:

1. How would you rate the present general business conditions in your area? Good, normal, or bad?
2. Six months from now do you think they will be better, same, or worse?
3. What would you say about available jobs in your area right now? Plenty, not so many, hard to get?
4. Six months from now will there be more, same, or fewer?
5. How would you guess your total family income to be six months from now? Higher, the same, lower?

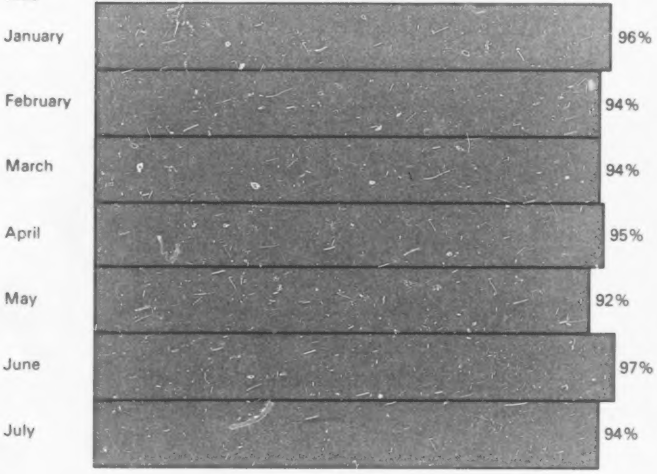
Note: Survey is a mail survey. 1969-1970 = 100.

Source: Survey by the National Family Opinion, Inc. for The Conference Board, latest that of April-June, 1985.

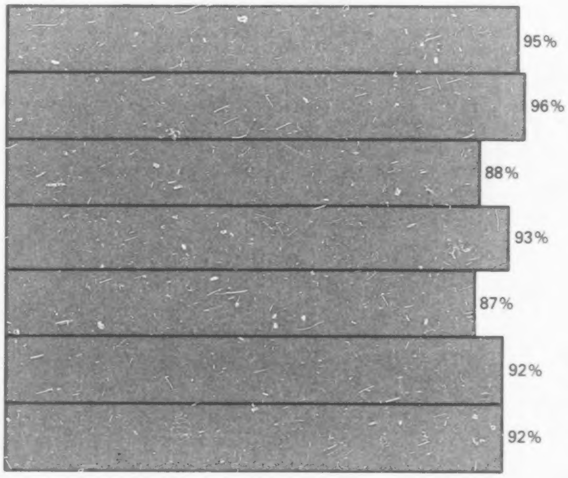
Rollercoaster



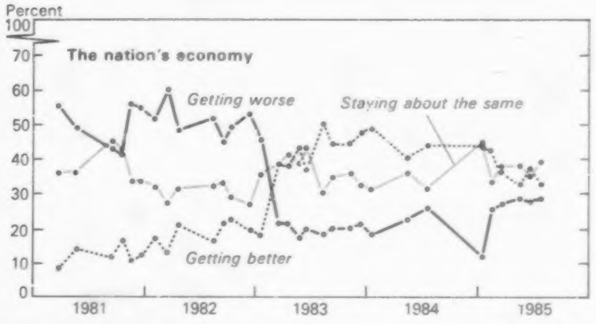
INDEX OF CONSUMER SENTIMENT
University of Michigan



CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDEX
The Conference Board



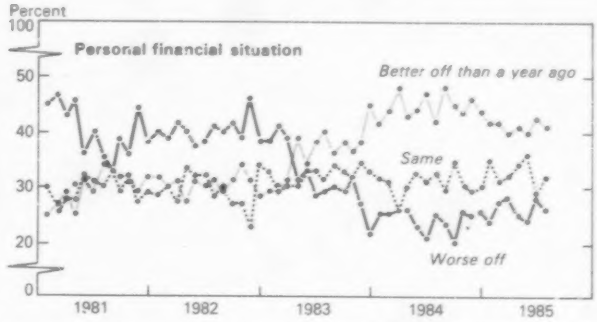
Question: Do you think the nation's economy is: getting better, getting worse, or staying the same?



Note: August 1982 sample size = 913. October 1982 data based on those who were certain, probably, or 50-50 chance they would vote in the 1982 election = 84%.

Source: Surveys by ABC News/*Washington Post*, February 26-March 6, 1981, through November 17-23, 1981; ABC News, December 11-12, 1981; ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 22-30, 1982 through October 5-11, 1982; ABC News, December 7-8, 1982; ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 18-22, 1983 through July 25-29, 1985.

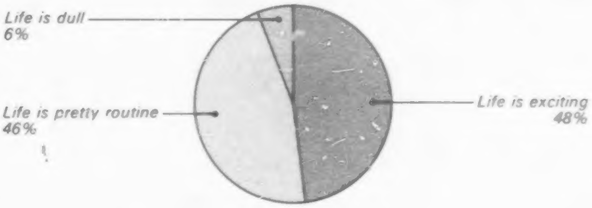
Question: We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that you (and your family living there) are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?



Source: Survey by Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, latest that of August, 1985.

PERSONAL LIFE

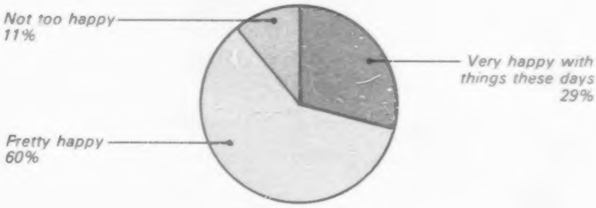
Question: In general, do you find life exciting, pretty routine, or dull?



Note: Interesting differences exist between age groups: 62% of those age 18-24 found life exciting, while only 41% of those age sixty and over did; 35% of those with less than a high school degree found life interesting, compared to 65% of those with a college degree; 50% of the whites in the survey found life exciting, but only 36% of the blacks did. Those with incomes of less than $10,000 were less likely to find life exciting (46%) than were those with incomes exceeding $25,000 (61%).

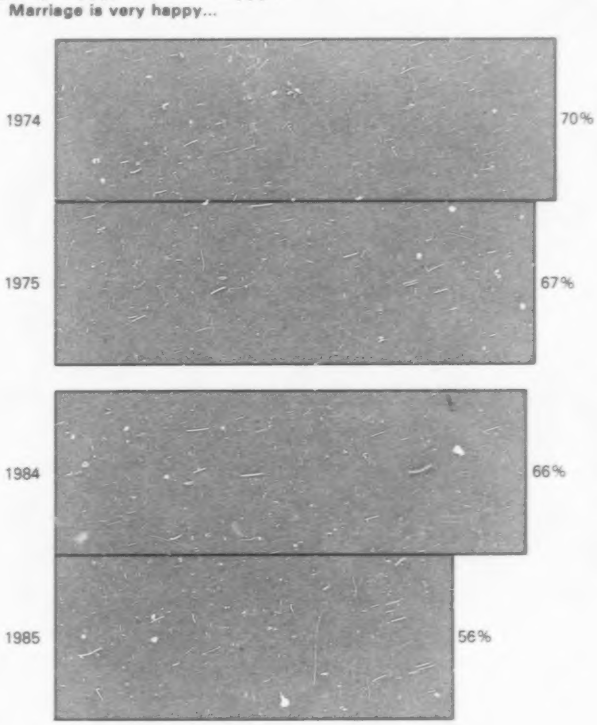
Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, February-April 1985.

Question: Taken all together, how would you say things are these days—would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?



Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, February-April 1985.

Question: Taking all things together, how would you describe your marriage? Would you say that your marriage is very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?



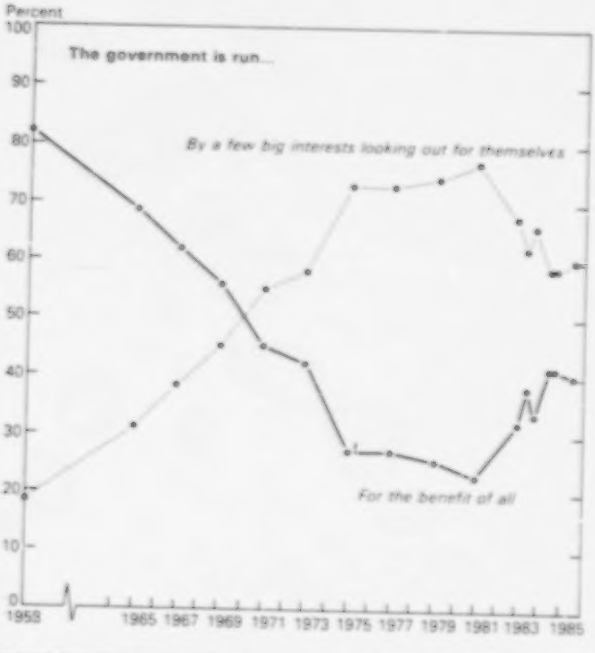
Note: 1985 was asked of half the sample.

Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, General Social Surveys, latest that of February-April 1985.

OPINION ROUNDUP

FEELINGS ABOUT OUR SOCIETY

Question: Would you say that government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all people?

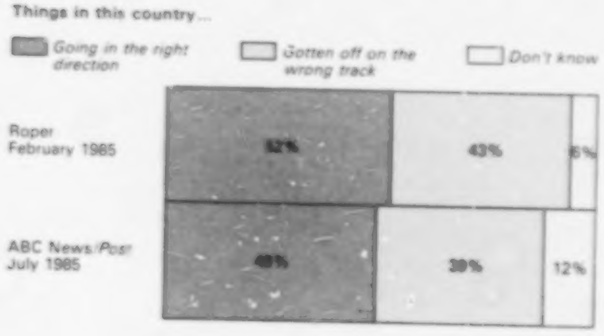


Note: Sample size for June 1983 = 1,145; November 1983 = 1,092.

Source: Surveys by the Center for Political Studies of the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan Election Studies, 1958-1984; the *New York Times* June 13-18, 1983 and November 18-22, 1983 and CBS News/*New York Times*, February 23-27, 1985.

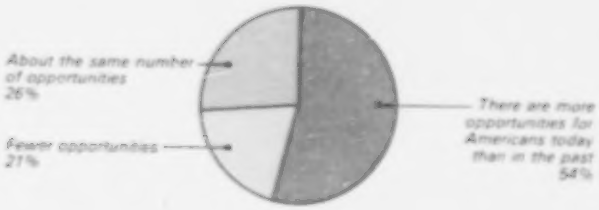
Question: Do you feel things in this country are generally going in the right direction today, or do you feel that things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track? (Roper)

Do you think things in this country are generally going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track? (ABC News/*Washington Post*)



Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-3), February 9-23, 1985, and ABC News/*Washington Post*, July 25-29, 1985.

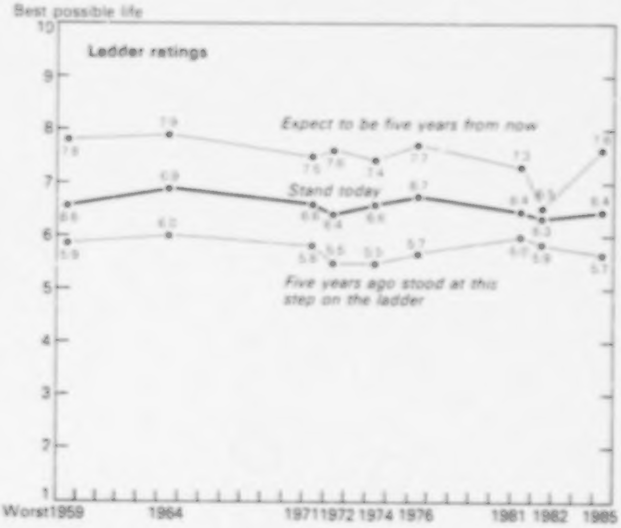
Question: Since the time this country was settled, the United States has been called the land of opportunity. Do you think there are more opportunities for Americans today than in the past, or less opportunities today, or about the same today as in the past?



Note: In a 1983 asking of the same question, Roper found that 40% thought there were more opportunities for Americans today than in the past, 34% thought there were fewer opportunities, and 25% thought there were about the same number of opportunities. In the 1985 asking shown above, blacks were more optimistic about the opportunities today, 55%, than the national average, 52%. 21% of blacks felt there were less opportunities, compared to 20%, the national average.

Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-2), January 5-19, 1985.

Question: Here is a picture of a ladder. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time? On which step would you say you stood five years ago? Just your best guess, on which step do you think you will stand in the future, say about five years from now?



Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of March 8-11, 1985.

AMERICANS EVALUATE THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Assessments of public opinion on policy issues that are remote and complex often conclude (1) that the public is substantially uninformed about the specifics of these issues and attends little to them; and (2), as a result, its views are unclear and erratic. My own review of polling data generally confirms the first of these conditions—but rejects the latter. The poll data on South Africa presented here are a case in point.

When given a chance, Americans readily acknowledge that they aren't very well informed about conditions in South Africa. At the same time, though, they have a reasonably firm idea of the general approach they want their leaders to take. First, the system of racial separation should be condemned and the United States should try to get the South African government to change course. Second, American policy should be cautious and prudent, careful not to do things that might make a bad situation worse. For instance: The government should persuade U.S. companies doing business in South Africa "to put pressure on the South African government to change its ways," but it should not end trade with South Africa. Sanctions are viewed skeptically. American economic involvement in South Africa is seen as probably doing more good than harm.

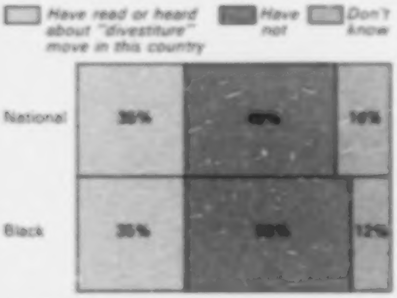
Today the public favors a general approach to South Africa that in a sense resembles the position Lincoln urged in the 1850s with regard to slavery in the American South: It is wrong, and one should never fail to acknowledge that essential fact. But recognition that it is wrong does not make wise and prudent any and all efforts that might hasten its end.

Black Americans are, understandably, more supportive of economic sanctions than is the public at large. Nonetheless, the view that our economic involvement in South Africa is helping the black population there, rather than merely propping up the white minority government, finds considerable support among blacks in the United States.

E.C.L.

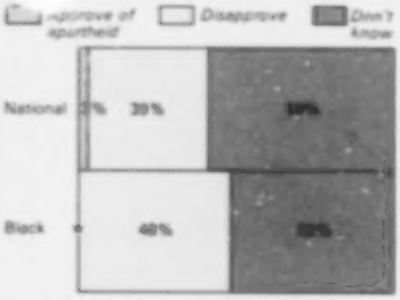
LEVELS OF INFORMATION

Question: Have you read or heard anything recently about a move in this country to stop U.S. businesses from investing in or doing business with South Africa, and forcing those businesses currently there to withdraw all their investments in South Africa?



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-3), February 9-23, 1985.

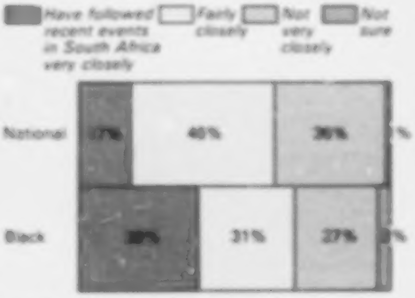
Question: Do you approve or disapprove of South Africa's system of racial separation called apartheid, or don't you know enough about it to have an opinion?



Note: * = 0. Sample size = 709. Black sample = 77.

Source: Survey by CBS News, August 29, 1985.

Question: How closely would you say you've followed the recent events in South Africa—very closely, fairly closely, or not very closely?

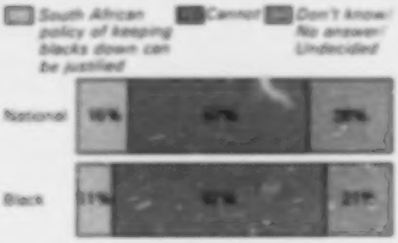


Note: Sample size = 1,009. Black sample size = 77.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, August 13-15, 1985.

SYMPATHY FOR BLACKS' PLIGHT IN SOUTH AFRICA

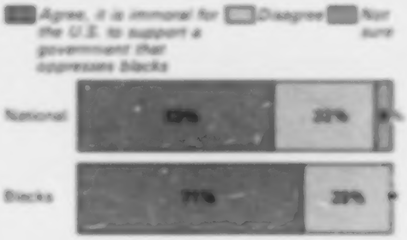
Question: In the Union of South Africa, the white minority has run the country and kept blacks from attaining any real political or economic power. Do you feel that this policy of keeping blacks down in South Africa can be justified or not?



Note: Sample size = 1,546. Black sample size = 129.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, May-June, 1977.

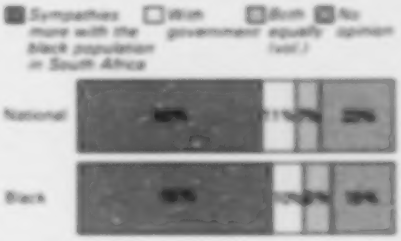
Question: Now I'd like to read you some statements about U.S. policy toward South Africa. For each, tell me whether you agree or disagree. . . .



Note: Sample size = 1,255. Black sample size = 108. * = 0.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, September 5-9, 1985.

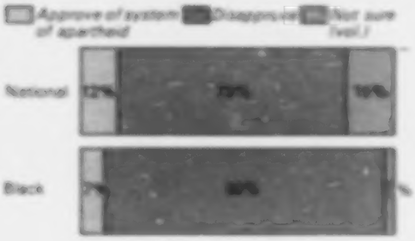
Question: In the South African situation, are your sympathies more with the black population or more with the South African government?



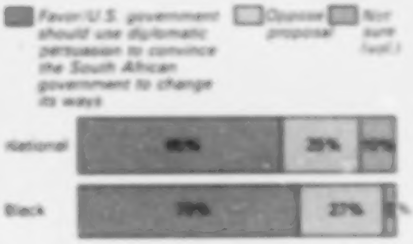
Note: Sample size = 1,009. Black sample size = 77.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, August 13-15, 1985.

Question: There has been a lot of news recently about South Africa, where a government dominated by whites uses a system called apartheid to deny the majority of South Africans, who are black, most political and economic rights. Do you strongly approve, somewhat approve, strongly disapprove of, or somewhat disapprove of this system of apartheid?



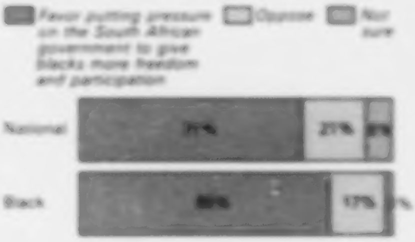
Question: Here in the United States various proposals have been made to exert pressure on the South African government to change its racial policies. As I read each item, please tell me whether you favor or oppose the proposal. . . .



Note: Sample size = 1,014 registered voters. Black sample size = 91.

Source: Survey by Time/Yankelovich, Skelly and White, April 30-May 2, 1985.

Question: Because of this system called apartheid in South Africa, the United States and other Western nations have put pressure on the South African government to give blacks in that country more freedom and participation in government. Do you favor or oppose this pressure being continued on the South African government?

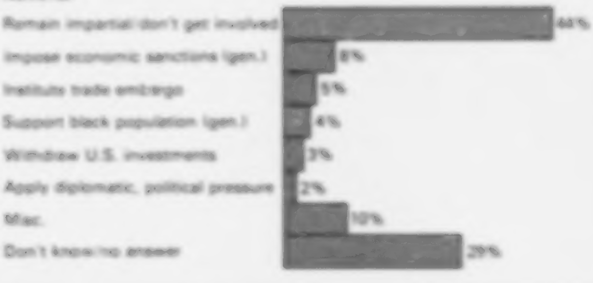


Note: Sample size = 1,255. Black sample size = 108.

Source: Surveys by Louis Harris and Associates, September 5-9, 1985.

DEALING WITH THE REGIME

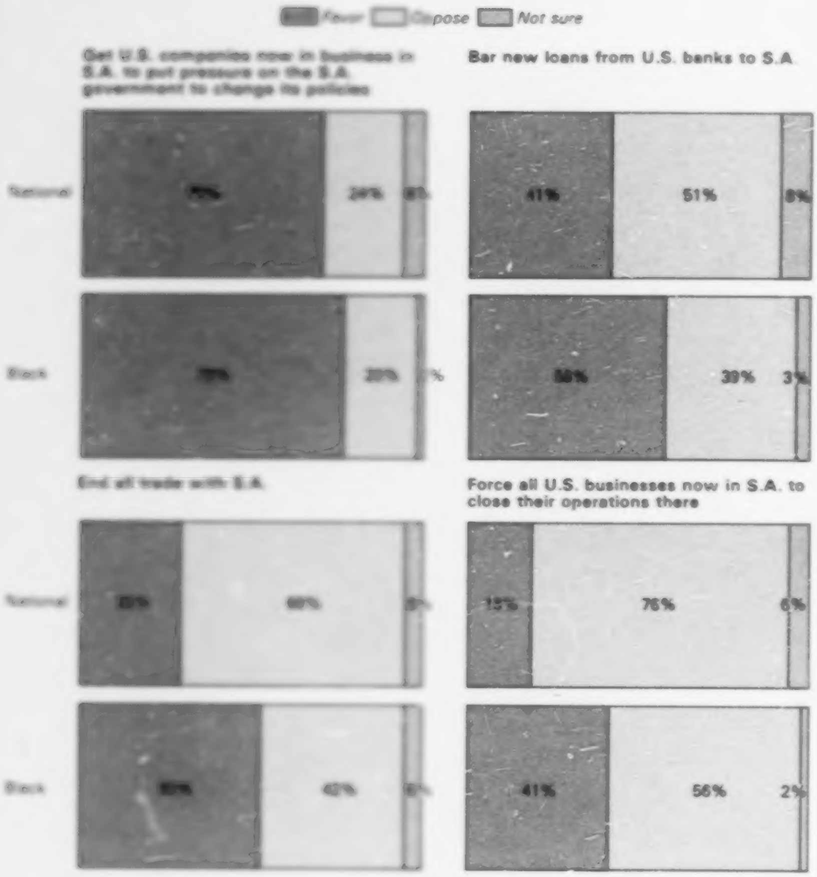
Question: What, if anything, should the U.S. do next?



Note: Sample size = 1,009. Multiple responses per respondent.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, August 13-15, 1985.

Question: Now let me ask you about the kinds of pressure that have been proposed that the U.S. apply to the white government of South Africa to make them change their racial policies. For each, tell me if you favor or oppose that step. . . .

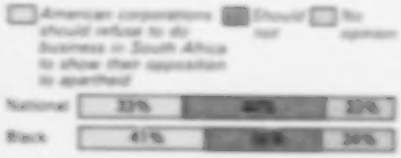


Note: Sample size = 1,254. Black sample size = 96.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, January 24-27, 1985.

BUSINESS INVESTMENT

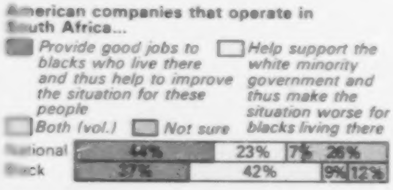
Question: Do you think American corporations should refuse to do business in South Africa in order to show their opposition to the system of racial segregation, known as apartheid?



Note: Sample size = 1,509. Black sample size = 175.

Source: Survey by CBS News/New York Times, May 29-June 2, 1985.

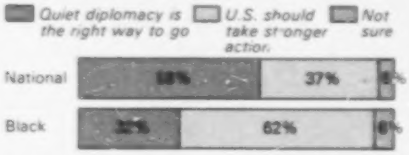
Question: Please tell me which of these two statements best represents your view about American companies that operate in South Africa. . . .



Note: Sample size = 1,014 registered voters. Black sample size = 91.

Source: Survey by *Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White, April 30-May 2, 1985.

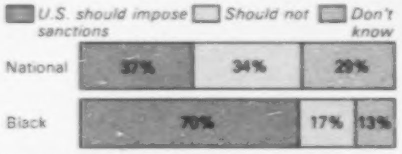
Question: President Reagan has argued that the best way to get South Africa to change its policies is through quiet diplomacy rather than through harsh public criticisms or economic sanctions. Do you think this policy of quiet diplomacy is the right way to go, or should the U.S. take stronger action?



Note: Sample size = 1,254. Black sample size = 96. Slightly different question working in September 1985 produced these responses. Sixty-one percent (national) said Reagan policy of constructive engagement deserves more time, 34% disagreed. Black response 46%, 49%.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, January 24-27, 1985.

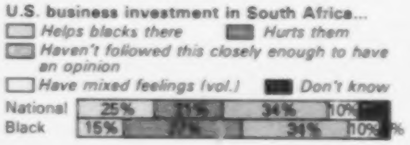
Question: Next month Congress will be debating whether or not to impose economic sanctions limiting trade with South Africa as a way to pressure South Africa to change its racial policies. Should the United States impose economic sanctions or not?



Note: Sample size = 709. Black sample size = 77. In a Gallup/*Newsweek* poll (9/27-28), 42% said the U.S. should impose sanctions, 39% should not. Among non-whites the figures were 69% impose sanctions, 23% should not.

Source: Survey by CBS News, August 29, 1985.

Question: There is a growing debate in this country about whether U.S. business investments in South Africa help or hurt black people who live under the white minority government. Some people say U.S. investments in South Africa help the blacks because it provides jobs at higher pay and better conditions than South African firms provide. Other people say it hurts the blacks because it reinforces the power of the white minority government and thus the apartheid system of segregation in South Africa. How do you feel, on balance, do you think U.S. investments in South Africa help the blacks or hurt the blacks or haven't you followed this closely enough to have an opinion?



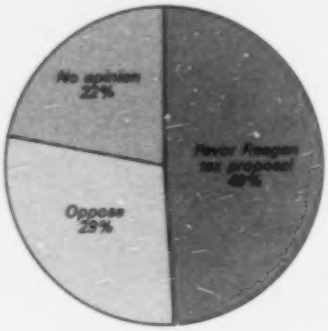
Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-3), February 9-23, 1985.

OPINION ROUNDUP

REACTION TO THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S TAX PLAN

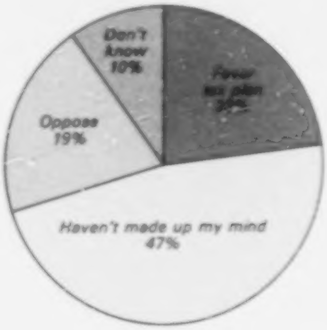
In our April/May issue we looked at attitudes toward taxes. In this issue, we show how people have reacted to the Reagan administration's plan. The public generally favors the plan, with some disagreement about specific proposals. Perhaps most surprising is that even though most people don't believe their taxes will go down, they still think the new plan would be fairer than the present system. They find its simplicity appealing.

Question: All things considered, would you say you are mostly in favor or mostly opposed to the new tax proposal (by Reagan)?



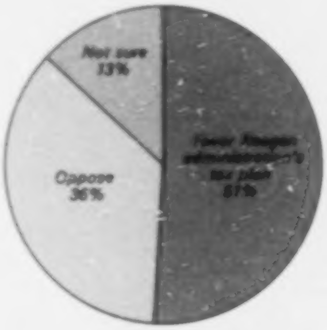
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, June 7-10, 1985.

Question: President Reagan wants to reduce the number of tax brackets to three and reduce the deductions that individuals and business now take. Do you favor or oppose the president's plan, or haven't you made up your mind?



Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Report 85-7), July 13-20, 1985.

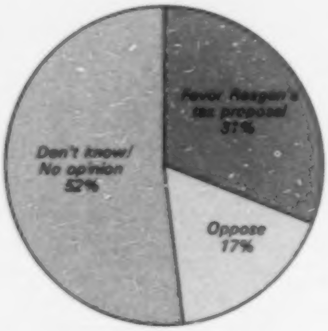
Question: In general, do you favor or oppose the Reagan administration's tax plan?



Note: Sample size = 1,013 registered voters. Question asked of those familiar with the tax plan = 64%.

Source: Survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White for *Time*, July 25-27, 1985.

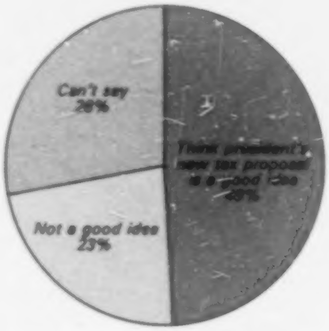
Question: Overall, would you say you favor or oppose Reagan's proposal, or don't you know enough to have an opinion on it?



Note: Question asked of those who had heard/read of Reagan tax proposal = 83%.

Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 13-16 and 20-22, 1985.

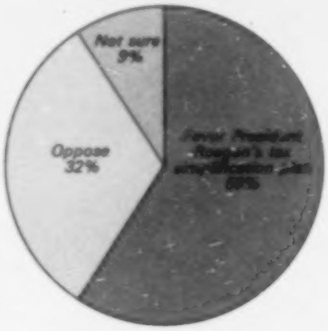
Question: Do you think the president's new tax proposal is a good idea?



Note: Sample size = 759.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *Newsweek*, May 29-30, 1985.

Question: I want to ask you about President Reagan's tax simplification plan. Under his proposal, the present federal income tax would be simplified by going to a basic tax of three brackets—15% for income less than $29,000, 25% for income between $29,000 and $70,000 and 35% maximum tax for income over $70,000. In return, many of the current deductions people now take off their income taxes would be eliminated. No one whose income is below $12,000 would pay taxes. In general, would you favor or oppose President Reagan's tax simplification plan?



Note: Sample size = 1,252.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, July 12-15, 1985.

OPINION ROUNDUP

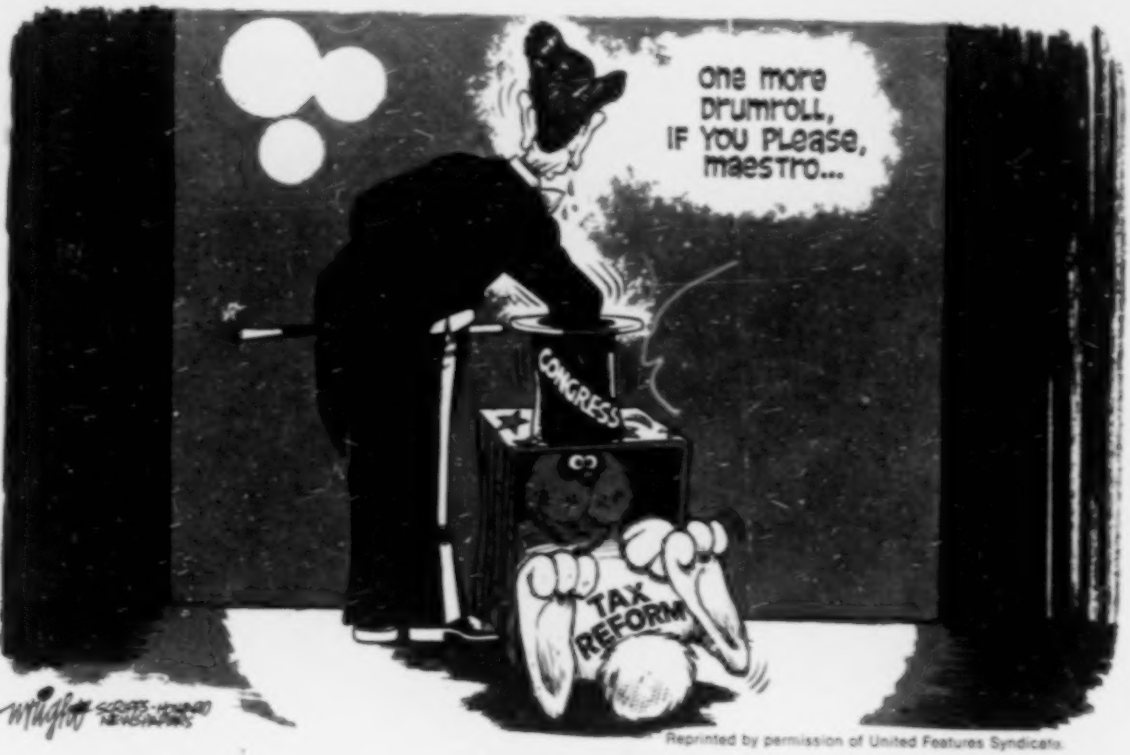
LOOKING AT SPECIFICS

Questions: Do you approve or disapprove of the following proposed tax changes. . . ? (Gallup/*Newsweek*) Please tell me whether you approve or disapprove of each of these proposed changes in the tax system. . .? (Gallup) Now let me ask you about some specific provisions of the Reagan proposal for tax simplification. For each, tell me if you would favor or oppose that provision. . . ? (Harris/*Business Week*) Do you approve or disapprove of the following proposed income tax changes. . . ? (ABC/*Washington Post*) As part of this tax plan, do you think that the deduction for local property taxes should be eliminated or kept as a deduction? (*Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White) Another part of the plan requires people to pay taxes on part of their fringe benefits, such as a company medical plan. Do you favor or oppose this? (*Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White).

	Gallup/ *Newsweek*	Gallup	Harris/ *Business Week*	ABC/ *Wash. Post*	*Time*/ YSW
Removing the federal deduction for state and local taxes	✗ 37/54	✗ 26/58		✗ 36/56	
Local and state income taxes			✗ 40/53*		
Local property taxes			✗ 33/62*		✗ 14/81
Limiting the federal deduction for mortgage interest on second homes	✓ 54/38		✓ 66/29	✓ 48/43	
Removing deductions for business expenses such as sports, theater, and other entertainment	✓ 59/36		✓ 65/31	✓ 62/33	
Taxing a portion of workers' fringe benefits, such as health insurance	✗ 20/75	✗ 23/61	✗ 26/69	✗ 17/80	✗ 21/77
Increasing deduction for dependents to $2,000			✓ 76/17	✓ 76/18	
No change in charitable contributions			✓ 76/21		
A maximum individual income tax of 35% /Lowering the top bracket for individuals from 50% to 35%		✓ 50/33	✓ 50/43		

Note: *Asked by Harris for *Business Week*, July 12-15, 1985. Category wording varied slightly, particularly on the fringe benefits and business entertainment categories.

Source: Surveys by Gallup for *Newsweek*, May 29-30, 1985; the Gallup Organization, June 7-10, 1985; Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week*, May 30-June 2, 1985; ABC News/*Washington Post* June 13-16 and 20-22, 1985; Yankelovich, Skelly and White for *Time*, July 25-27, 1985.

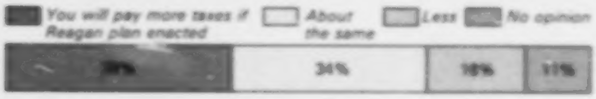

One more drumroll, if you please, maestro...
CONGRESS
TAX REFORM
Wright Scripps-Howard Newspapers

Reprinted by permission of United Features Syndicate.

OPINION ROUNDUP

MY TAXES PROBABLY WON'T GO DOWN

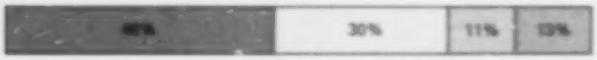
Question: If these changes (major revisions in the federal income tax system proposed by Reagan) are made, do you think you would pay more in taxes, pay less in taxes, or pay about the same as you pay now?



Note: Asked of three-quarters of sample.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, May 29-June 2, 1985.

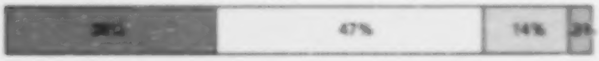
Question: From everything that you have heard or read about it, do you think the amount of taxes you pay would go down, go up, or stay about the same, if the Administration's proposed overhaul of the federal tax system were put into effect?



Note: In June, 25% said their taxes would go down, 32% go up, and 29% said they would stay about the same.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, August 13-15, 1985.

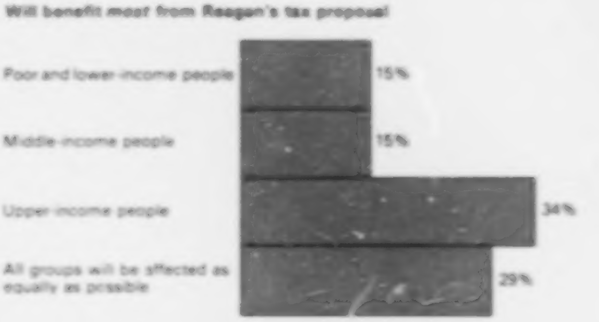
Question: Just your best guess, if the Reagan proposal is passed without change, do you think you will end up paying more taxes, less taxes, about the same amount?

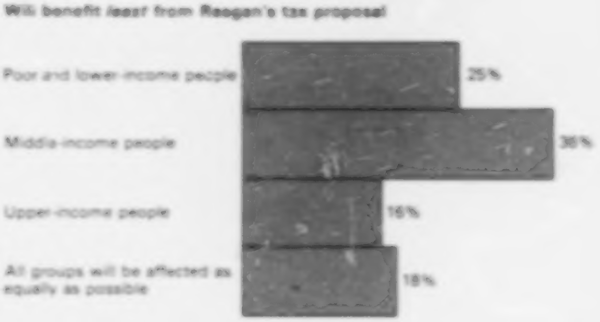


Note: Asked of those who had heard/read of the plan = 83%.

Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 13-16 and 20-22, 1985.

Question: Who do you think will benefit most/benefit least under Reagan's tax proposal—poor and lower-income people, middle-income people, upper-income people, or will all groups be affected as equally as possible?



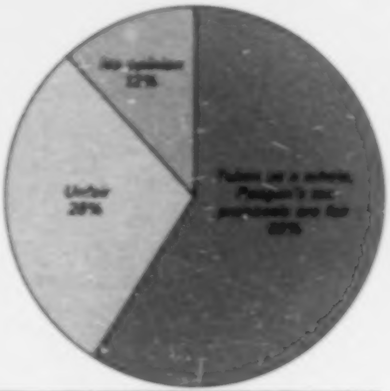


Note: "Don't know/no opinion" not shown.

Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 13-16 and 20-22, 1985.

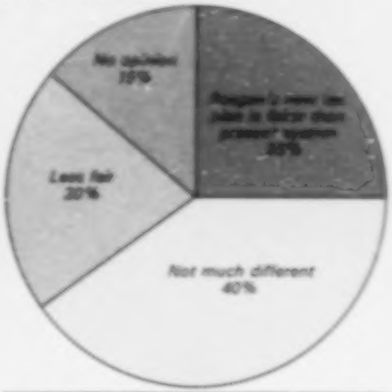
THE NEW PLAN IS STILL FAIRER

Question: Would you describe Ronald Reagan's tax proposals, taken as a whole, as very fair, somewhat fair, somewhat unfair, or very unfair?



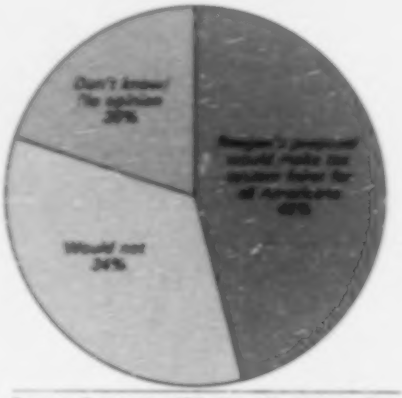
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, May 29-June 2, 1985.

Question: Do you think the new plan (proposed by Reagan) would make for a fairer distribution of the tax load among all taxpayers, one that's less fair, or wouldn't it be much different from the present system?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, August 13-15, 1985.

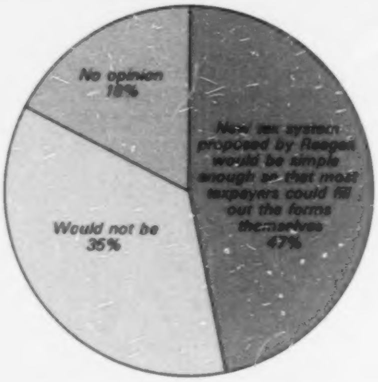
Question: Do you think Reagan's proposal would make the federal tax system fairer for all Americans than it is now, or not?



Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 13-16 and 20-22, 1985.

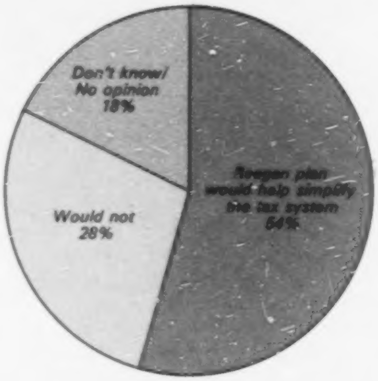
AND IT'S SIMPLER

Question: From what you've heard or read about it, do you think the new tax system (proposed by Reagan) would be simple enough so that most taxpapers could fill out the forms themselves?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, June 7-10, 1985.

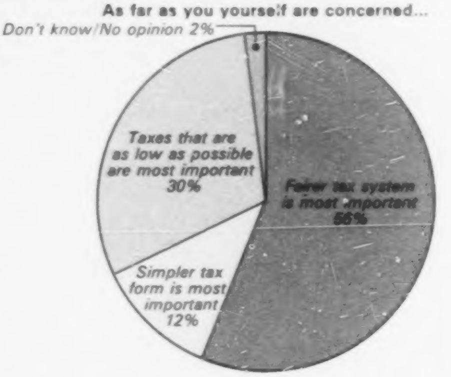
Question: Do you think Reagan's proposal would help simplify the tax system, or not?



Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 13-16 and 20-22, 1985.

TAXING QUESTIONS

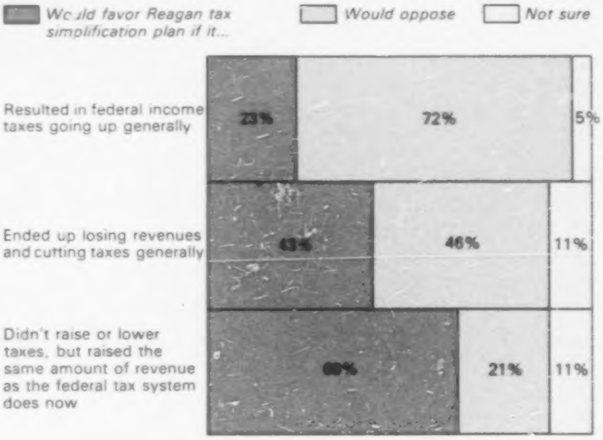
Question: Most people want three things in federal tax reform: (1) a tax system that is fairer to all people than the present one; (2) a tax form that is simpler to figure out; (3) Taxes that are as low as possible. Which would you say is the most important so far as you yourself are concerned . . . ?



Note: When asked what was second most important, 40% said taxes as low as possible, 30% said a fairer tax system, and 29% a simpler tax form.

Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 13-16 and 20-22, 1985.

Question: Now would you favor or oppose the Reagan tax simplification plan if it . . .

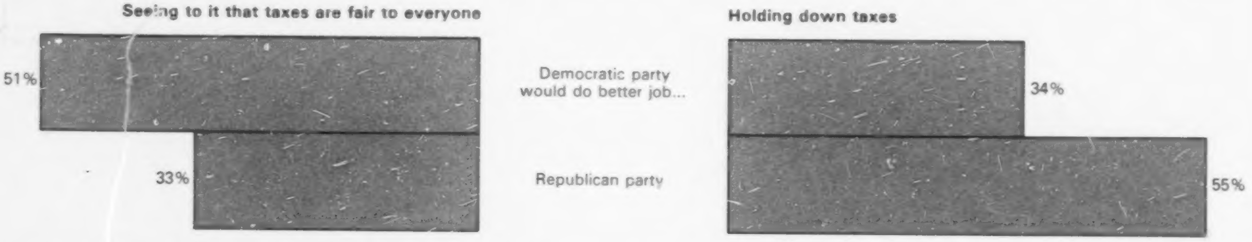


Note: Sample size = 1,252.

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Business Week* July 12-15, 1985.

TAX TREATMENT

Question: I am going to mention a few of the problems and issues facing the country. Regardless of how you personally feel about the two parties, I'd like you to tell me which one, the Republican party or the Democratic party, would do a better job of handling each particular problem or issue. How about . . .?



Note: In later askings by other survey organizations, the gap between Democrats and Republicans on seeing to it that taxes are fair has narrowed.

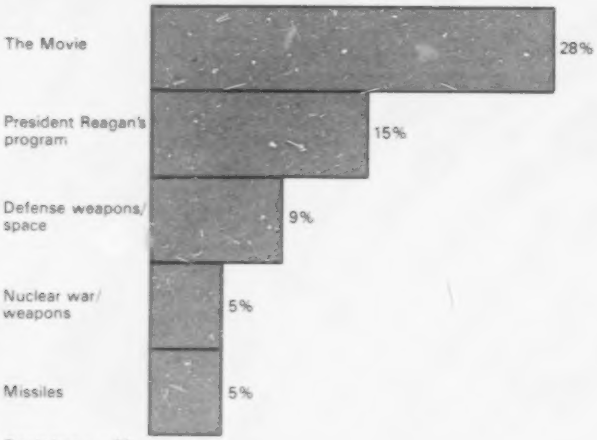
Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, February 22-26, 1985.

STAR WARS STATUS

Since President Reagan first mentioned a space-based defensive weapons system (S.D.I.) in 1983, the pollsters have been tapping public sentiment. Their efforts illustrate an important lesson in survey research: When an issue is complicated and the public not well-informed, responses bounce all over, depending on which nerve the pollsters touch.

Most surveys show that between 50 and 60 percent of Americans have heard of the Reagan proposal. Yet, when one survey organization asked Americans what came to mind when "Star Wars" was mentioned, the largest response (28%) was the movie. Opinions vary widely on what the system would do, depending on the way the questions are worded. Only one question we found asked Americans—without any complicated explanations—whether the system could work. Sixty-two percent told CBS News/*New York Times* interviewers that it could.

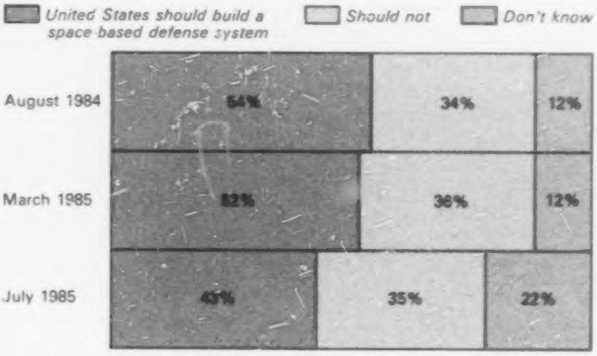
Question: What comes to mind when I say "Star Wars"?



Don't know = 8%

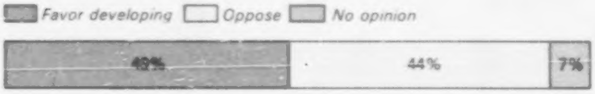
Note: Sample size = 1,005. All other responses were less than 4%.
Source: Survey by Arthur Finkelstein for Richard D. Sellers, February 1985.

Question: President Reagan has proposed that the United States build a space-based defense system against incoming missiles. Many people think that this is a good idea because it would give us an advantage over the Russians in this area, which would help deter a Soviet attack. Many others feel that a space-based defense system is a bad idea because it would escalate the arms race and increase the risk of a nuclear confrontation with Russia. How do you feel—do you think the United States should or should not build a space-based defense system?



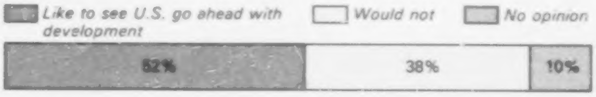
Note: In an ABC News/*Washington Post* poll of July 25-29, 1985, 41% approved of S.D.I.; 53% disapproved. Five percent didn't know or had no opinion. The question wording in this poll was: "Supporters say such weapons could guarantee protection of the United States from nuclear attack and are worth whatever they cost. Opponents say such weapons will not work, will increase the arms race, and that the research will cost many billions of dollars. How about you: would you say you approve or disapprove of plans to develop such space-based weapons"?
Source: Surveys by the Roper Organization, latest that of July 13-20, 1985.

Question: Do you favor or oppose developing such defensive weapons (which use lasers and particle beams to shoot down enemy missiles), or what?



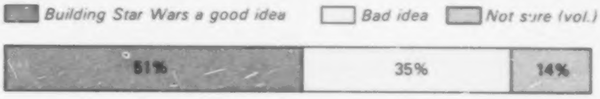
Note: Sample size = 504.
Source: Survey by ABC News, January 4-6, 1985.

Question: Would you like to see the United States go ahead with the development of such a system ("Star Wars") or space-based defense against nuclear attack, or not?



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, January 25-28, 1985.

Question: From what you know about it, do you think that building the so-called Star Wars defense system in space is a good idea or a bad idea?



Note: Sample size = 1,014 registered voters.
Source: Survey by *Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White, April 30-May 5, 1985.

✓ Arguments For

COST EFFECTIVENESS

✗ 1. Here are some arguments that have been made against a space-based anti-missile defense system. (Hand respondent card) Would you tell me for each of those arguments whether you find it a very convincing argument against a space-based anti-missile defense system, or somewhat convincing, or not very convincing, or not at all convincing?—A space-based anti-missile defense system isn't worth its high cost because it would only be partially effective because it would not intercept all incoming missiles. (Roper, 7/13-20/85)*

Convincing argument	52%	Not convincing argument	33%

✗ 2. Do you think this system ("Star Wars" defense or defensive nuclear system in space that would destroy incoming missiles before they reached the United States) would be worth the amount of money it would cost? (CBS News/*New York Times*, 1/2-4/85)

Yes	40%	No	46%

✗ 3. Supporters say such weapons could guarantee protection of the United States from nuclear attack and are worth whatever they cost. Opponents say such weapons will not work, will increase the arms race, and that the research will cost many billions of dollars. How about you: Would you say you approve or disapprove of plans to develop such space-based weapons? (ABC News/*Washington Post*, 7/25-29/85)

Approve	41%	Disapprove	53%

✗ 4. President Reagan has proposed that the U.S. move ahead to develop a new defense system in outer space and on the ground. He described the possibilities of building laser-beam and particle-beam systems and stations in space and on the ground that could shoot down incoming nuclear missiles. Now let me read you some statements about this proposal. For each, tell me if you agree or disagree. . . . Even though President Reagan wants to spend only $3.8 billion at first on developing a laser defense system, the cost could rise to $25 to $50 billion on a system that might not even work. (Harris, 3/2-5/85)

Agree	43%	Disagree	30%

EFFECT ON ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS

✓ 5. Here are some arguments that have been made in favor of a space-based anti-missile defense system. (Hand respondent card) For an argument to be convincing it has to be both important and true. If it isn't important, or isn't true it isn't convincing. Would you tell me for each of these arguments whether you find it a very convincing argument for a space-based anti-missile defense system, or somewhat convincing, or not very convincing, or not at all convincing?—Development of a space-based anti-missile defense system by the U.S. would encourage the Soviets to come to an agreement with the U.S. on controlling nuclear arms. (Roper, 7/13-20/85)*

Convincing argument	46%	Not convincing argument	43%

✓ 6. In your opinion, would the United States' developing this system ("Star Wars"), or a space-based defense system against nuclear attack, increase or decrease the likelihood of reaching a nuclear arms agreement with the Soviet Union? (Gallup, 1/25-28/85)

Increase chances for agreement	47%	Decrease	32%
		No diff. (vol.)	13%

✓ 7. Throughout the arms control talks, President Reagan has insisted that the U.S. continue to do research on the Star Wars defense system in space. Do you think that developing such a system is more likely to produce an arms control agreement with the Soviets, less likely, or don't you think that the Star Wars system has any impact on arms control negotiations? (*Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White, 4/30-5/2/85)

More likely	37%	Less	25%	No impact	25%

✓ 8. Do you think developing this system . . . [see question 2] would make negotiating with the Soviet Union easier? (CBS News/*New York Times*, 1/2-4/85)

Yes	48%	No	41%

✓ 9. [See number 4 for complete preface]—Once the Russians knew we were successfully building a new anti-nuclear defense system, they would be much more willing to agree to a treaty that would halt the nuclear arms race. (Harris, 3/2-5, 1985)

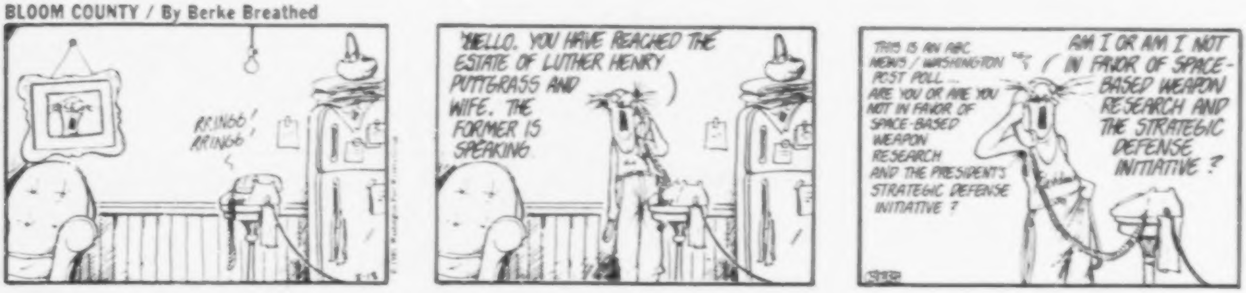
Agree	52%	Disagree	44%

EFFECT ON U.S. SECURITY

✓ 10. From what you know about it, do you think that building the so-called Star Wars defense system in space is a good idea for the U.S. or a bad idea? (*Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White, 4/30-5/2/85)

Good idea	51%	Bad idea	35%

BLOOM COUNTY / By Berke Breathed


RRINGG! RRINGG!
"HELLO. YOU HAVE REACHED THE ESTATE OF LUTHER HENRY PUTTGRASS AND WIFE. THE FORMER IS SPEAKING
THIS IS AN ABC NEWS / WASHINGTON POST POLL... ARE YOU OR ARE YOU NOT IN FAVOR OF SPACE-BASED WEAPON RESEARCH AND THE PRESIDENT'S STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE ?
AM I OR AM I NOT IN FAVOR OF SPACE-BASED WEAPON RESEARCH AND THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE ?

✗ Arguments Against

✓ 11. [See number 5 for preface]—A space-based anti-missile defense system would reduce the risk of nuclear war by reducing the chance that the Soviets would launch an attack against us. (Roper, 7/13-20/85)*

Convincing argument	56%	Not convincing argument	33%

✓ 12. Would the development of "Star Wars" (the president's strategic defense strategy) make the United States more secure or less secure?(Sindlinger for Heritage Foundation, 5/7-27/85)

More secure	73%	Less secure	9%

✓ 13. [See number 1 for preface]—If the U.S. tries to develop a space-based anti-missile defense system it would increase the chance that the Soviets would launch an attack against us before we are able to install the system . . . (Roper, 7/13-20/85)*

Convincing argument	35%	Not convincing argument	51%

✗ 14. Would having this system . . . [see question 2] make you feel more secure or would putting nuclear weapons in space worry you? (CBS News/*New York Times* 1/2-5/85)

Feel more secure	25%	Worry you	60%
Neither (vol.)	2%	Both (vol.)	4%

EFFECT ON WORLD SECURITY

✓ 15. [See number 5 for preface]—The world would be safer if the U.S. and the Soviet Union could each rely on a space-based anti-missile defense system for their security rather than relying, as they do now, on offensive missile systems to deter each other from launching an attack . . . (Roper, 7/13-20/85)*

Convincing argument	49%	Not convincing argument	37%

✗ 16. [See number 4 for preface]—The only way to avoid a nuclear war is to develop new weapons in space and on the ground that can shoot down all nuclear missiles. (Harris, 3/2-5/85)

Agree	44%	Disagree	52%

17. The idea behind our nuclear defenses over the past forty years is called "mutually assured destruction." It says that what keeps both the United States and the Soviet Union from firing off their nuclear weapons at each other is that the other side would counterattack with dreadful destruction. Now some people think the "Star Wars" (Strategic Defense Initiative) system would destabilize this balance of power. They claim that if one side had a way to defend itself against nuclear counterattack, it could launch an aggressive war without fear of retaliation. Do you think that a "Star Wars" system threatens its opponents or not? (*Los Angeles Times*, 1/19-24/85)

Threatens	56%	Does not threaten	28%

✓ 18. In your opinion, would developing this system ("Star Wars" or spaced-based defense against nuclear attack) make the world safer from nuclear destruction, or less safe? (Gallup, 1/25-28/85)

Make world safer	50%	No diff. (vol.)	11%
Less safe	32%		

EFFECT ON ARMS RACE

✗ 19. [See number 1 for preface]—If the U.S. developed a space-based anti-missile defense system, the Soviets would try to develop ways to overcome it, thereby speeding up the nuclear arms race. (Roper, 7/13-20/85)*

Convincing argument	62%	Not convincing argument	25%

✗ 20. Do you think this system . . . [see question 2] would make the arms race more dangerous than it is now? (CBS News/*New York Times*, 1/2-4/85)

Yes	54%	No	35%

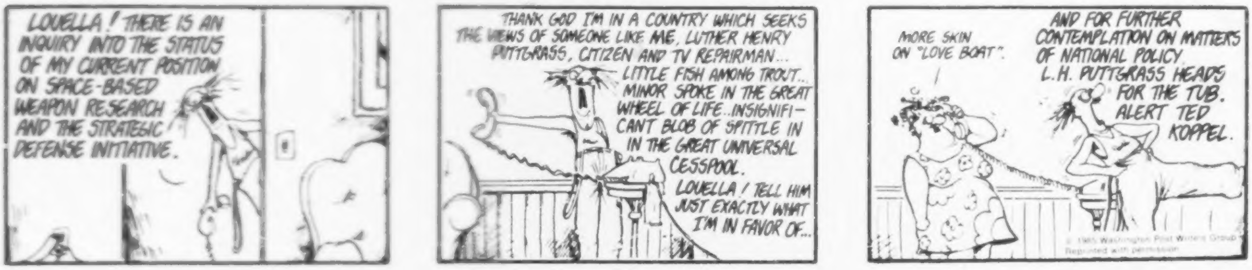
✗ 21. If the United States does develop such defensive weapons (which use lasers and particle beams to shoot down enemy missiles), would that increase or reduce the arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union, or what? (ABC News/*Washington Post*, 1/4-6/85)

Increases race	67%	Wouldn't change (vol.)	6%
Reduces race	21%		

✗ 22. [See number 7 for preface]—Once it looked as though we were capable of defending against today's nuclear weapons, the Russians would then go all-out to develop brand new kinds of nuclear and other weapons we couldn't defend against . . . (Harris 3/2-5/85)

Disagree	20%	Agree	75%

Note: *Convincing argument = "Very" + "Somewhat"; Not convincing argument = "Not very" + "Not at all."


LOUELLA! THERE IS AN INQUIRY INTO THE STATUS OF MY CURRENT POSITION ON SPACE-BASED WEAPON RESEARCH AND THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE.
THANK GOD I'M IN A COUNTRY WHICH SEEKS THE VIEWS OF SOMEONE LIKE ME, LUTHER HENRY PUTTGRASS, CITIZEN AND TV REPAIRMAN...
LITTLE FISH AMONG TROUT... MINOR SPOKE IN THE GREAT WHEEL OF LIFE...INSIGNIFICANT BLOB OF SPITTLE IN IN THE GREAT UNIVERSAL CESSPOOL.
LOUELLA! TELL HIM JUST EXACTLY WHAT I'M IN FAVOR OF...
MORE SKIN ON "LOVE BOAT".
AND FOR FURTHER CONTEMPLATION ON MATTERS OF NATIONAL POLICY L.H. PUTTGRASS HEADS FOR THE TUB. ALERT TED KOPPEL.
© 1985 Washington Post Writers Group Reprinted with permission

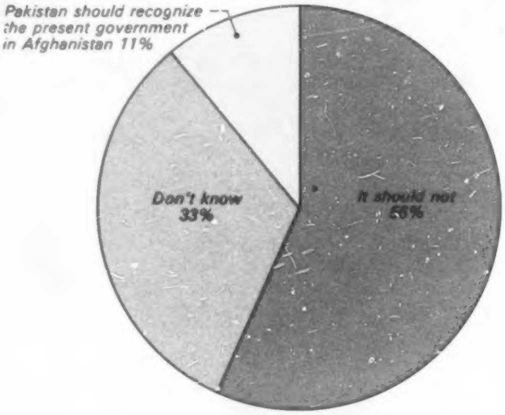
ATTITUDES IN

The Roper Center at the University of Connecticut has an impressive collection of survey data from abroad. On pages 36-39 we display some material—surveys taken in Pakistan and West Germany—from that collection.

Data on Pakistani attitudes about the situation in Afghanistan, about the United States and the Soviet Union, and relations with India are shown below. Pakistanis support the Afghan refugees, even though they expect the refugees will be an economic

FEELINGS ABOUT THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

Question: Should Pakistan recognize the present government in Afghanistan?

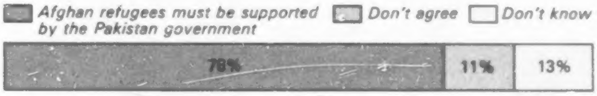


For pages 36-37.

Note: Surveys are nationally representative samples, conducted through interviews with approximately 1,700 scientifically selected households at 175 localities across Pakistan. Villages and urban areas are included.

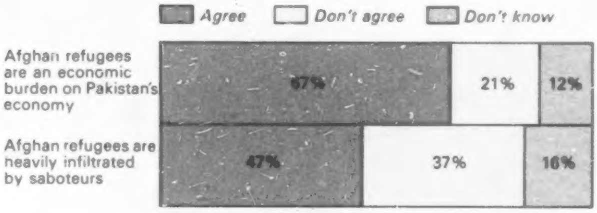
Source: Survey by Pakistan Gallup for the Pakistan Institute of Public Opinion, 1984.

Question: Do you agree or not with the following statement? "Afghan refugees must be supported by the Pakistan government."*



Note: *Question wording is approximate.

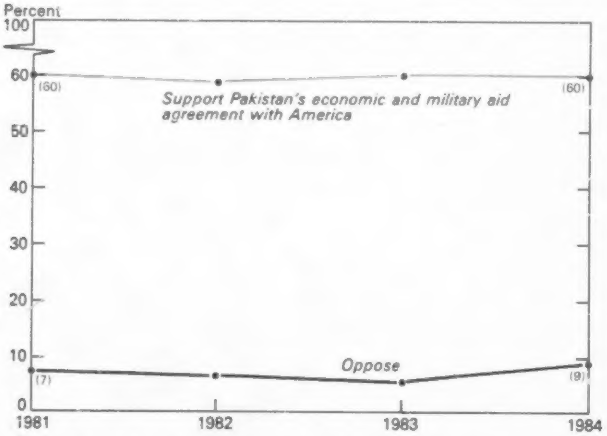
Question: Do you agree or not with the following statements? "Afghan refugees are an economic burden on Pakistan's economy." "Afghan refugees are heavily infiltrated by saboteurs."*



Note: *Question wording is approximate.

STEADY SUPPORT FOR AID AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES

Question: Do you support or oppose Pakistan's economic and military aid agreement with America?



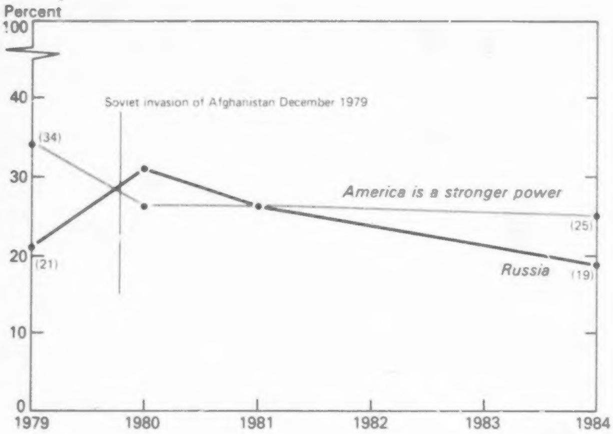
Note: "Don't know" = 33% in 1981; 35% in 1982; 35% in 1983; 31% in 1984.

PAKISTAN

burden. They support continued nonrecognition of the Afghan regime. After the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, Pakistanis perceived the Soviet Union to be stronger than the United States. Today, the United States is seen as stronger and as a better ally. The Soviet invasion appears to have had other effects on Pakistanis: They are somewhat less concerned about war with India, and they strongly support a no-war pact.

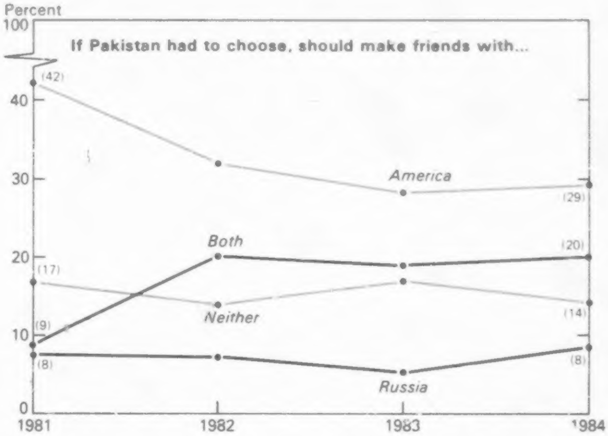
PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION . . .

Question: Who do you think is a stronger power: America or Russia?



Note: "Equal match" = 18% in 1979; 23% in 1980; 20% in 1981; 25% in 1984. "Don't know" = 26% in 1979; 20% in 1980; 28% in 1981; 31% in 1984.

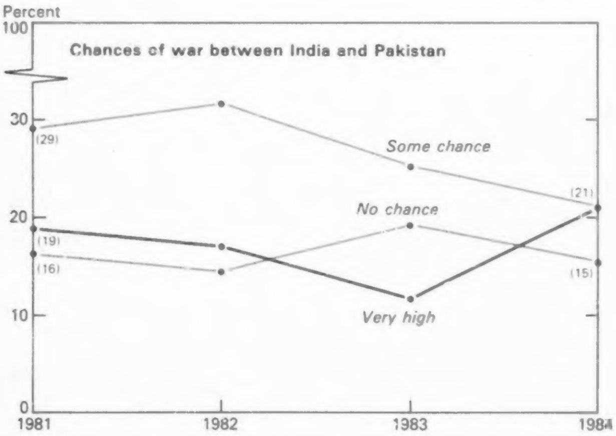
Question: If Pakistan had to choose between the two, should it makes friends with America or Russia?



Note: "Don't know" = 28% in 1981; 27% in 1982; 31% in 1983; 30% in 1984. When asked which side Russia would support in a war between Pakistan and India, 66% felt that Russia would support India, 4% felt Russia would support Pakistan, and 4% felt that Russia would remain neutral. 27% did not know which side Russia would support in a war between India and Pakistan.

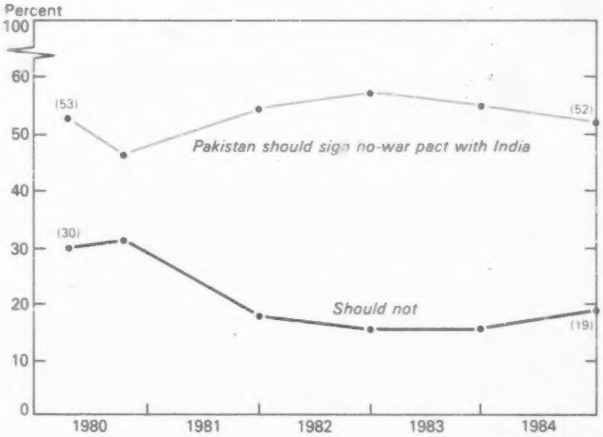
AND INDIA

Question: What do you think are the chances of war between India and Pakistan?



Note: "Don't know" = 37% in 1981; 36% in 1982; 44% in 1983; 43% in 1984.

Question: Should Pakistan sign a no-war pact with India?



Note: "Don't know" = 18% in April 1980; 23% in October 1980; 28% in 1981; 28% in 1982; 29% in 1983; 29% in 1984.

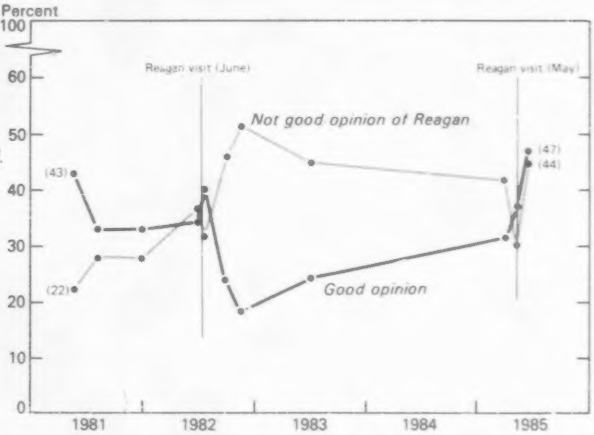
OPINION ROUNDUP

WEST GERMAN ATTITUDES ABOUT

Ronald Reagan's personal contact with the German people in June 1982 and May 1985 boosted not only perceptions of the president himself, but also of Americans and American foreign policy. After the latest visit, the percentage saying that U.S. foreign policy was morally superior to that of the Soviet Union moved from 25 to 30 percent. Those saying it was not fell from 48 to 37 percent. These are among the conclusions to emerge from several Allensbach Institute surveys and its director, Elisabeth Noelle-Neuman.

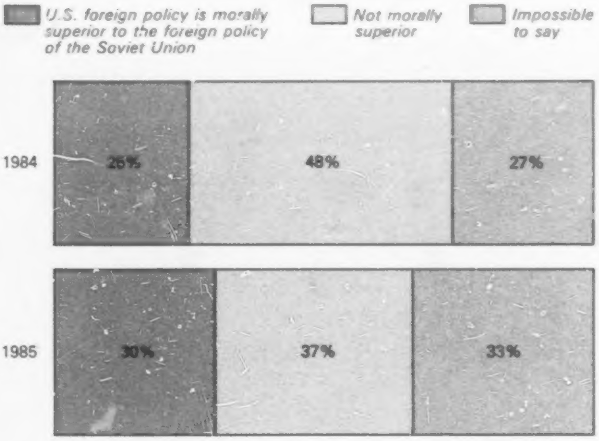
The importance of the presidential visits to the continuing strength of the Alliance can be seen against the backdrop of some changes in West Germans' opinions. In the summer of 1981, a plurality rejected the idea of unilateral disarmament. By June 1983, a plurality had been won over to the idea, and they have stayed that way. On another question, the percentage who

Question: All in all, do you have a good opinion of Reagan or not such a good opinion?



Source: Surveys by the Allensbach Institute, West Germany, latest that of May 1985.

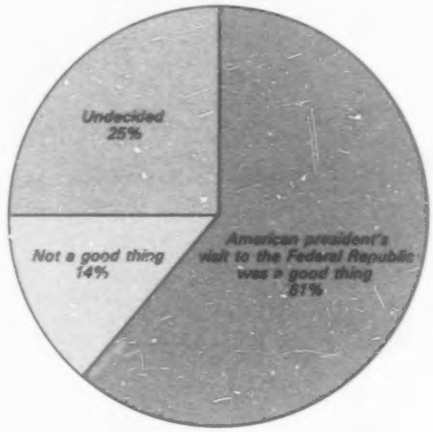
Question: If you think of U.S. and Soviet foreign policy, would you say the foreign policy of the U.S. is *morally* superior to the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, or isn't it morally superior?



Note: Sample size for August/September 1984 = 1,027.

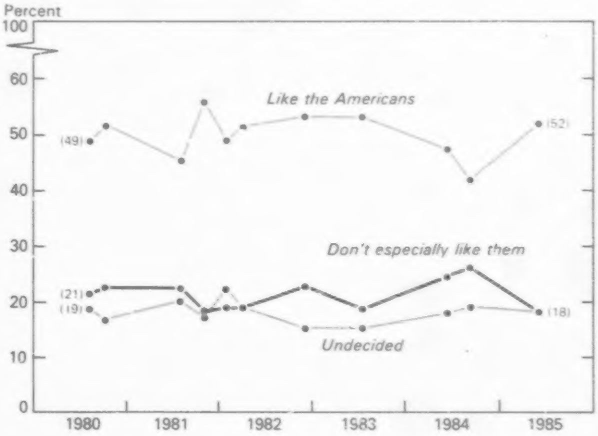
Source: Surveys by the Allensbach Institute, West Germany, latest that of May 1985.

Question: All things considered, was the American president's visit to the Federal Republic a good thing or not a good thing?



Source: Surveys by the Allensbach Institute, West Germany, May 1985.

Question: Do you like the Americans, or don't you especially like them?

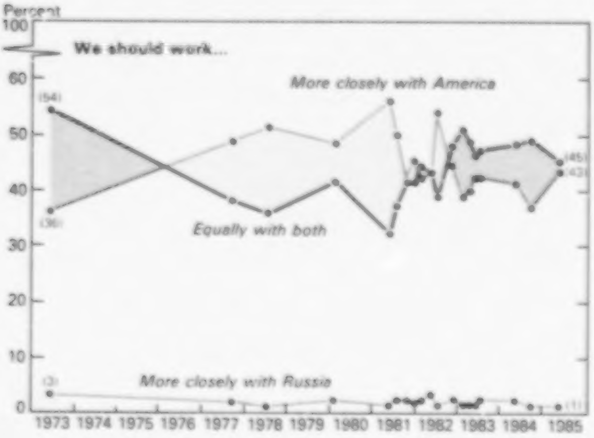


Source: Surveys by the Allensbach Institute, West Germany, latest that of May 1985.

REAGAN AND THE ALLIANCE

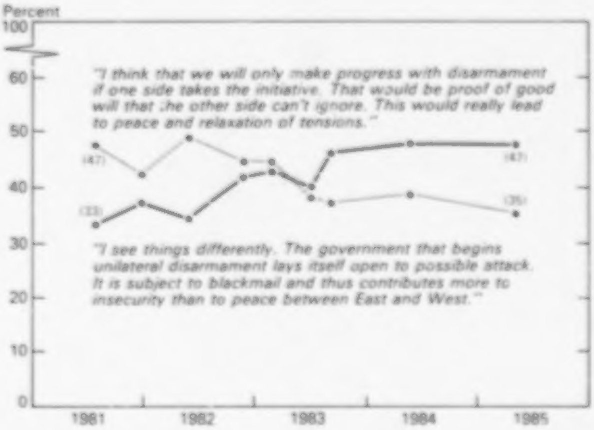
say West Germany should "work more closely with the Soviet Union" has never exceeded 3 percent, but the relationship between the responses "work more closely with the United States" and "equally with both" has been changing since the debate on deployment began. The latter has been gaining ground almost consistently since November 1981. On this question, both visits changed sentiment slightly in favor of the United States. Not all signs point to Germans distancing themselves from the Alliance. On another question shown below, solid majorities of West Germans opt for the Alliance with "America and other friendly nations of the world" over neutrality.

Question: A general question about German foreign policy: In the future, should we work together equally closely with America and Russia, or more closely with Russia, or more closely with America? What is your opinion?



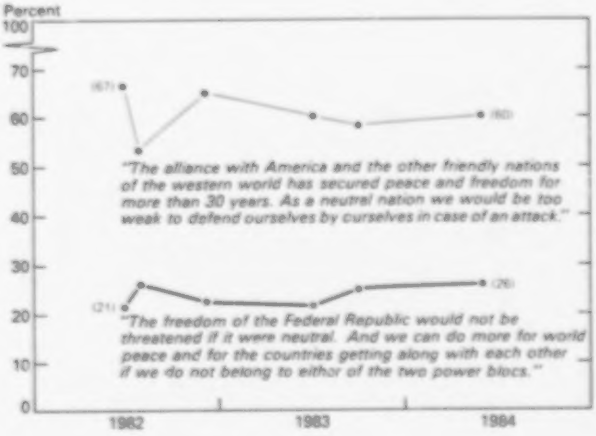
Source: Surveys by the Allensbach Institute, West Germany, latest that of May 1985.

Question: Here are two people talking about disarmament. Please take a look at this. Which of the two says what you also think—the one above or the one below? . . .



Source: Surveys by the Allensbach Institute, West Germany, latest that of May 1985.

Question: There are different opinions about what the relations between the Federal Republic and other nations should be like. Could you read what these two people are saying? Which of them would you tend to agree with? . . .



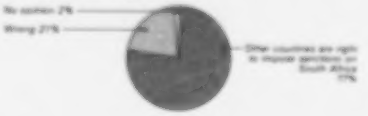
Source: Surveys by the Allensbach Institute, West Germany, latest that of May 1984.

OPINION ROUNDUP

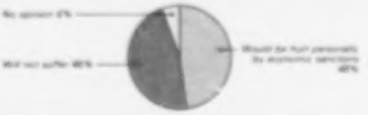
BLACK AND WHITE OPINION IN SOUTH AFRICA

BLACK RESPONSE

Question: Do you think that other countries are right or wrong to impose sanctions on South Africa unless South Africa agrees to get rid of the apartheid system?

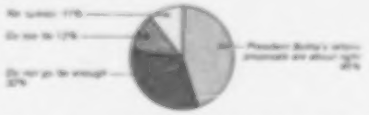


Question: If other countries were to impose economic sanctions against South Africa, do you think these would or would not hurt you personally?



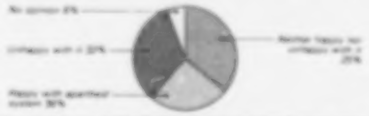
WHITE RESPONSE

Question: Thinking about the reform proposals contained in President Botha's speech last Thursday, which of the following comes nearest to your views?



Note: "Do not go far enough" = "quite far" (22%) and "nearly far enough" (10%); "Go too far" = "a little too far" (6%) and "much too far" (6%).

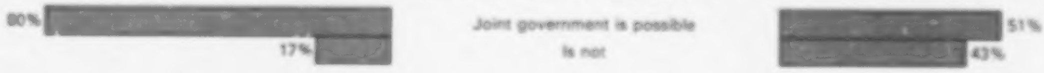
Question: What is your view of the apartheid system . . .?



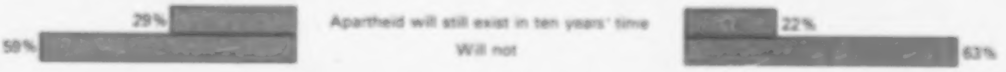
Note: "Happy with apartheid system" = "very happy" (15%) and "fairly happy" (21%); "Unhappy" = "fairly unhappy" (20%) and "very unhappy" (13%).

BLACK RESPONSE **WHITE RESPONSE**

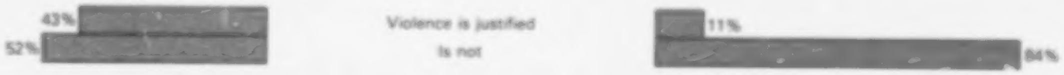
Question: Do you think it is possible for South Africa to be ruled by a joint government of blacks and whites, or not?



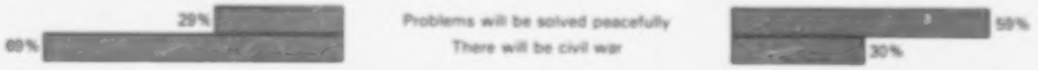
Question: Do you think the apartheid system will or will not still exist in ten years' time?



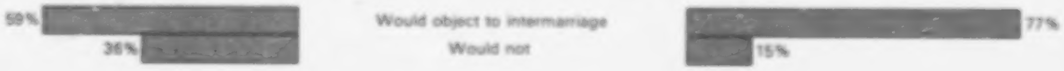
Question: Some people say that violence is justified to change the South African apartheid system. Others say that violence to change the system is not justified. Which of these do you believe?



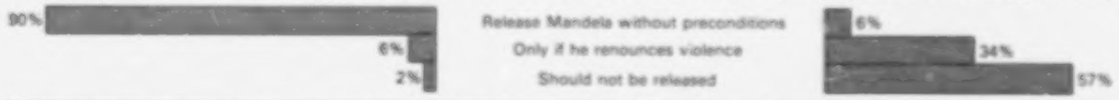
Question: Do you think that South Africa's problems will be solved peacefully, or do you think there will be a civil war?



Question: Would you or would you not object in principle, if a member of your family married a white/black person?



Question: There has been talk about releasing Nelson Mandela, the black ANC leader. Do you think he should be released . . .?



Note: (White sample) MORI/Markinor interviewed a representative sample of 500 white South Africans by phone across 100 sampling points. Data were then weighted for representativeness. (Black sample) MORI/Markinor interviewed a quota sample of 430 blacks in Johannesburg and Durban areas in person. Data were then weighted for representativeness.

Source: Survey by Markinor (Gallup affiliate in South Africa) for Market & Opinion Research International (MORI) for the *Sunday Times* of London, August 19-21, 1985.

by Linda S. Lichter

Who Speaks for Black America?

Civil rights leaders and the Reagan administration have been trading charges of racism lately. Clarence Pendleton, chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, has labeled traditional civil rights advocates as "media-designated black leaders" who advocate a "new racism" by promoting preferential treatment for minorities. NAACP chairman of the board William F. Gibson has called Ronald Reagan "basically a reactionary and racist." Meanwhile, black leaders such as Jesse Jackson and representatives of the Urban League and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference have accused Reagan and his administration of insensitivity toward the plight of black Americans. Reverend Jackson has described the present political climate as one of "anti-black mania and a search for scapegoats."

Underlying this debate are some critical assumptions about race relations in this country. Spokesmen for both camps sketch their readings of black America's pulse, while the media eagerly follow the battle among elites. Yet, in the midst of this controversy, little hard evidence exists on how the average black American feels about the problems that have set the leaders against one another, nor do we have any detailed knowledge of black leaders' positions on issues that affect not only blacks, but all Americans

To help fill in these gaps, we conducted surveys among black leaders and a national sample of 600 blacks. First, we determined which organizations most often speak for black America. We did this by tabulating citations of the civil rights groups and political organizations that received the most coverage on issues related to race in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Time*, and *Newsweek* in 1984. According to our analysis, those groups receiving the most national media coverage were the NAACP, the Urban League, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Operation PUSH, the National Conference of Black Mayors, and the Congressional Black Caucus. We then compiled a list of the individuals who exercise substantial influence on each organization's policies. For the four civil rights groups, this included all those in executive positions as well as members of their boards of directors and trustees. For the two groups of elected officials, we compiled lists of their total membership. From these, we polled a stratified random sample of leaders on key social, political, and economic issues.[1]

The interviews were conducted by telephone during May-July 1985. Most of the questions we used were adopted from surveys previously executed by organizations such as Gallup, the National Opinion Research Center, the Associated Press, the *New York Times*, and CBS News. A total of 105 leaders from all six groups completed our survey.[2] Only 6 percent of the leaders we contacted declined to participate. We then asked the same questions of a nationwide random sample of 600 black Americans, drawn by Survey Sampling, Inc. of Westport, Connecticut. This survey has a 4 percent margin of error. The interviews were conducted by Lawrence Johnson and Associates of Washington, D.C and Metro Research Services, Inc. of Fairfax, Virginia.

The surveys revealed a surprising divergence between black leaders and the average black American on a broad spectrum of concerns, including some at the very heart of race relations. In fact, the widest gulf between black leaders and black America centered on some explosive social issues with racial overtones. On the hotly debated subject of affirmative action, 77 percent of the leaders agreed that minorities should be given preferential treatment in jobs and colleges, while the exact same proportion of black Americans—77 percent—rejected the notion that race should be a major criterion for selection. Busing schoolchildren also produced a significant split: About two-thirds of black leaders favored busing, while a majority of other blacks opposed it.

An even greater schism emerged on the volatile issue of American business investments in South Africa. About three-quarters of all blacks agreed that U.S. corporations should remain there and use their influence to break the barriers of apartheid, while a majority of leaders would force corporations to pull out of South Africa. It should be noted that these interviews were completed before the Pretoria government imposed its recent state of emergency, but after protests and arrests at the South African embassy in Washington had become a staple of media coverage.

The Current Climate

Other issues concerned with race produced a mixture of consensus and conflict between leaders and the national sample. Most black people were optimistic about the general condition of black America, while black leaders displayed a marked pessimism. Two-thirds of our national sample said black people are currently making progress, while almost as many leaders maintained that blacks are going backwards. On the more specific concern of job discrimination, the more positive assessments of the average black person came through again. A majority said they had never experienced racial discrimination in applying for a job, though three-quarters of the leaders felt they had encountered prejudice. This discrepancy has at least two possible explanations: Black people may be more likely to confront discrimination at the top levels of society; this would explain why successful black leaders were more likely to experience prejudice. Alternatively, leaders and ordinary blacks may simply have different perceptions of what constitutes racial discrimination.

Table 1
Attitudes of Blacks

	Leaders	National
Most blacks today making progress or going backwards?		
Making progress	39%	66%
Going backwards	61	34
Have you, personally, ever experienced racial discrimination against blacks in terms of applying for a job, or not?		
Have experienced racial discrimination	74	40
Have not	26	60
Do you approve or disapprove of marriage between blacks and whites?		
Approve	91	77
Disapprove	9	23
Some people say that to make up for past discrimination, members of minority groups should be given preferential treatment in getting jobs and places in college. Others say that ability, as determined by test scores, should be the main consideration. Which point of view comes closer to how you feel on this matter?		
Minorities should be given preference	77	23
Ability should be the main consideration	23	77
On the whole, do you think that most white people want to see blacks get a better break, want to keep blacks down, or don't you think they care either way?		
Get better break	26	30
Keep blacks down	28	24
Don't care	46	46
Would you say the Democratic party is now more interested, as interested, or less interested in helping to solve the problems of black Americans as compared with four years ago?		
More interested	10	46
As interested	31	26
Less interested	59	28
Would you say the Republican party is now more interested, as interested, or less interested in helping to solve the problems of black Americans as compared with four years ago?		
More interested	9	17
As interested	17	23
Less interested	74	58
Do you approve or disapprove of the way Ronald Reagan is handling his job as president?		
Approve	13	30
Disapprove	87	70
Recently there has been a great deal of discussion about racial discrimination in South Africa. Some people say that American corporations should not be allowed to invest money there and that corporations already having investments there should be forced to sell them. Other people say that American corporations should be allowed to remain in South Africa so that they may use their influence to help promote equality for black people. Which of these two positions comes closer to your own?		
Corporations should not invest in South Africa	59	26
Corporations should use their presence there to help black people	41	74
If a young black person works hard enough, do you think he or she can usually get ahead in this country, in spite of prejudice and discrimination, or that he or she doesn't have much of a chance no matter how hard he or she works?		
Can usually get ahead	78	82
Not much chance	22	18

The two groups were about equally optimistic in agreeing that a young black person can get ahead in our society if he or she works hard enough, despite discrimination. Both groups also shared the same vision of white attitudes toward black progress: Just under half of each group thought whites have no strong feelings for or against black progress. Roughly a quarter said whites want to keep blacks down, and about the same proportion thought whites want to see blacks get a better break. In addition, majorities of both groups approved of racial intermarriage, although black leaders expressed greater support.

In view of the leaders' greater tolerance of intermarriage, it was surprising to find that they were more race conscious on matters of community control. Although majorities of both groups said that race was not important on these questions, black leaders were four times more likely to assert that only blacks should control schools and stores in black neighborhoods.

Social and Economic Matters

A varied collection of social, political, and economic issues produced more divergence than consensus between our two samples. In general, the leaders were more liberal on social issues. A majority of leaders, for example, would allow homosexuals to teach in public schools, a tolerance not shared by most black Americans. In addition, blacks were three times as likely as black leaders to favor a ban on all abortions. These two groups also expressed markedly different sympathies on prayer in the public schools: 83 percent of all blacks would allow school children to pray, but a

	Leaders	National
Suppose there is a public school that is attended mostly by black children. Do you think the principal should be a black person, a white person, or that race should not make any difference?		
Black	35	8
White	0	1
No difference	56	91
How about stores in black neighborhoods? Do you think they should be owned by blacks, whites, or that race should not make any difference?		
Owned by blacks	44	9
Whites	0	1
No difference	56	90

	Agree/Favor		Disagree/Oppose	
	Leaders	National	Leaders	National
A woman with young children should not work outside the home unless it is financially necessary	30%	70%	40%	30%
Without the help they have gotten from the West, third world nations would be even worse off than they are now	83	71	17	29
Big corporations should be taken out of private ownership and run in the public's interest	22	50	78	50
The American private enterprise system is generally fair to working people	63	50	37	50
The Equal Rights Amendment	91	83	9	17
Prayer in the public schools	40	83	60	17
The death penalty for murder	33	55	67	45
Allowing homosexuals to teach in the public schools	59	40	41	60
Ban on all abortions	14	43	86	57
Harsher sentences for those convicted of crimes	65	84	35	16
Busing of black and white school children from one school district to another	68	47	32	53

National Sample Only

	National
Are you a member of any civil rights organization?	
Yes	14%
No	86
Do you think that the black leaders you see on TV newscasts and read about in the newspapers are generally speaking for the majority of black people, or do you think they usually speak for only a minority of black people?	
Speak for majority	52
Speak for minority	48
Do you think it is appropriate or inappropriate for leaders of black groups in the United States to play a role in United States foreign policy?	
Appropriate	83
Inappropriate	17
(Of those who answered "appropriate" to above:) Do you think these black leaders should work through the United States State Department or talk directly to foreign leaders?	
State Department	65
Talk directly to foreign leaders	35

majority of leaders opposed putting religion in the classroom. The split on this issue is somewhat surprising, since majorities among both the leaders and other blacks are regular churchgoers. More than half of each group attends weekly religious services, and more than three-quarters go to services at least once a month.

On issues of crime and punishment, the average black American took the tougher line. A majority favored the death penalty for murder, while two-thirds of leaders rejected capital punishment. Likewise, the national sample expressed greater support for harsher sentences for convicted criminals. The two groups agreed, however, on two key gender issues—ERA and working mothers—although sentiments were liberal on the former issue and conservative on the latter. Large majorities of both groups favored passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, but both groups also agreed that women with small children should not work outside the home unless it is financially necessary.

The strongly liberal leanings of black leaders on social issues were moderated somewhat on economic questions, while the national sample was sharply split over the free enterprise system. Fully half of black America would take corporations out of private ownership, more than double the proportion among the leadership. Likewise, almost two-thirds of the leaders agreed that private enterprise is generally fair to working people, while the national sample again split right down the middle. The stronger free market leanings of black leaders may reflect the substantially higher incomes they enjoy compared to our national sample. Fifty-nine percent of the leaders reported 1984 household incomes of over $50,000, compared to only 3 percent of all black Americans. More than two-thirds of the national sample said their households received less than $20,000 per year, while only 5 percent of leaders were at this low end of the scale.

The relative affluence of black leaders is undoubtedly related to their impressive educational achievements. Fifty-nine percent said they had graduate degrees, the exact proportion earning over $50,000 a year. Overall, only one black American in seven reported finishing college, compared to an overwhelming 80 percent of the leaders.

Political Inclinations

The political arena has, for the past three decades, served as the most important forum for voicing black America's concerns. It is here that black leadership emerged and coalesced. Yet, this is the area that highlighted some of the most interesting differences between black leaders and their constituents. For example, in describing themselves politically, 68 percent of the leaders called themselves liberals, compared to only 27 percent of all black people. The national sample was also three times as likely as the leaders to call themselves conservative, and a majority said they were middle-of-the-road, compared to only one in four leaders.

These general political differences were also reflected in divergent views of the political parties. We asked both groups to tell us whether they thought the Democratic and Republican parties were more interested, as interested, or less interested in solving the problems of black Americans compared with four years ago. In general, black leaders were more alienated from both parties. Although their skepticism toward Republicans might be expected, they also perceived an increasing distance between themselves and the Democratic party. While three-quarters of the leaders called the Republican party less interested, over half also said the Democrats were less interested in solving the problems of black America than they had been four years ago. According to our survey, the Republican party still has a long way to go to prove itself with black people, but they are more likely than their leaders to compliment the efforts of Republicans. For example, they were about twice as likely as the leaders to say the Republican party was becoming more interested in black concerns.

Based on the recent presidential election, where Ronald Reagan received only 10 percent of black America's votes, he might expect only minimal support from this group. Not surprisingly, majorities of both leaders and our national sample disapproved of the way Mr. Reagan is handling his job. However, 30 percent of black Americans approved of the president's performance, more than twice the proportion of leaders giving their approval. In the latest Gallup poll conducted August 13-15, 1985, 31 percent of blacks nationwide approved of the job Ronald Reagan was doing.

In further probing the question of leadership, we asked black Americans if they thought it was appropriate for black leaders to play a role in U.S. foreign policy. A large majority favored the participation of their leaders in foreign negotiations, but about two-thirds said black leaders should work through the State Department rather than talking directly to foreign leaders. We should note that this is a general question and should not necessarily be interpreted as criticism of any particular incident in which black leaders dealt directly with foreign governments. For example, it is doubtful that black America would fault the recent successful efforts of Reverend Jesse Jackson to free a U.S. serviceman held captive in Syria.

Black Americans were sharply divided about how well black leaders represent their interests. Only about half of all blacks said that the leaders they see on television and read about in the newspapers represent a majority of black people. The other half of our national sample said these leaders speak for only a minority of blacks. This split may be related to the small proportion of blacks, 14 percent, who said they belonged to any civil rights organization. Many blacks, therefore, may not be in close touch with the policies of some black leaders and civil rights groups. This result highlights a

(Continued on page 58)

by William C. Adams

The Beirut Hostages: ABC and CBS Seize an Opportunity

The 1985 hostage crisis was in some ways a rerun of events in Iran. About fifty Americans were again held captive by fundamentalist Moslems in a Middle Eastern country. Certain things were different, though. Five years ago, some blamed the hostage television blitz on the Carter White House and its early all-consuming preoccupation with Iran. In 1985, however, the White House tried to downplay events and imposed a partial news blackout. This time it was clear who set the news agenda, and it was not the man who would have preferred to spend a week on his California ranch.

Much of the controversy surrounding this year's hostage coverage stemmed from its sheer volume, which critics said blew the event out of proportion, displaced other significant news stories, complicated the negotiation process, and rewarded the hijackers and captors. These sentiments led Henry Kissinger, Margaret Thatcher, and Ed Meese to fantasize about news blackouts, should such events occur in the future.

The extent of the press coverage of the Beirut hostages was staggering. ABC devoted an average of two-thirds (68 percent) of *World News Tonight* to the hostages, compared with 53 percent of the early evening news time it had given the Iran captives during the first sixteen days of that crisis. CBS went from 50 percent to 62 percent, and NBC was up from 48 to 63 percent. On four separate nights, ABC spent less than two minutes on all non-hostage news.

What most press critics found most objectionable this time was the remarkable succession of TV interviews with American hostages—several of whom defended their captors' cause, motives, and behavior. Henry Kissinger was the most prominent—though by no means the only—critic of broadcasting the hostages' statements.

How did the networks present the hostage interviews? This study focused on ABC (which, thanks to correspondent Charles Glass's interviews, was widely seen as scooping the competition) and CBS (which is the ratings leader). Limits on time and resources excluded NBC from the study. The research centered on the flagship early-evening newscasts, which have by far the largest audiences of any news programs. Using tapes from the Vanderbilt Television News Archives, researchers coded all hostage-related stories on *ABC World News Tonight* and *CBS Evening News* from June 14—the first night the networks broke the hostage story—through June 29—the last newscast before the hostage release. These newscasts together aired more than seven hours of Beirut hostage stories.

Hostage interviews dominated coverage of the topic that dominated the evening news. ABC ran interviews in eleven stories over ten nights; CBS had thirteen stories with hostage interviews over nine nights. They were used as the lead stories seven times on ABC and eight times on CBS.

To appreciate just how successfully the hostage tapes took precedence, consider the allocation of airtime to sources (the seconds given to non-network people speaking about the situation either on or off camera). On ABC about four out of every ten minutes came from the hostages themselves—especially Allyn Conwell and Captain John Testrake. The hostages (37 percent), together with their families (13 percent) received half of all ABC's source airtime. If hostage interview time is added to the time given to Nabih Berri and other Shiites (15 percent), then a majority of ABC's airtime went to the captors and those under their control (see figure 1).

President Reagan received 5 percent of ABC's source airtime, and all other U.S. administration, congressional, and military sources received 7 percent. The remaining source airtime went to terrorism experts (7 percent), assorted former government officials (6 percent), Israelis (6 percent), and released Beirut hostages (4 percent).

CBS trimmed the length of the hostage interviews (30 percent), but aired a larger dose of hostage relatives (17 percent). Otherwise, the pattern on CBS was fairly similar to that on ABC. Thanks to the Amal's insistence that ABC share its interviews, CBS had access to and used nearly the same series of interviews that appeared on ABC.

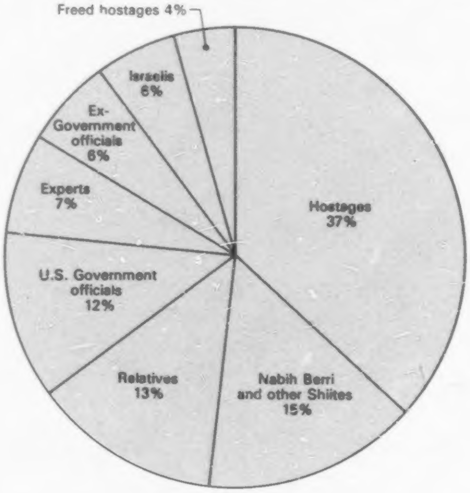
After settling down in Beirut, the networks began to carry an almost daily succession of hostage material. To recap the series as it ran on ABC, recall the following:

- Still standing on Shiite soil, the almost airborne Demis Roussos—one of the first men released—praised his captors as "so nice" (June 18).
- The exclusive Charles Glass interview with the TWA crew. With a gun held to his head, Captain Testrake was asked if he favored a rescue attempt; he did not (June 19).
- The first rowdy press conference where Shiite gunmen had to instruct the Western press corps on the need for restraint and civility. The seven hostages said they wanted their families to know they were "OK" and were being treated fine (June 20).
- Excerpts of comments by Allyn Conwell and other hostages from June 20 interviews (June 21).
- A short voice clip from Testrake who said the crew was in good health (June 22).
- The Lebanese-taped session with eight hostages saying they felt fine and hoped they would be released soon (June 24).
- A control-tower interview with TWA crew member Philip Maresca about the severity of an insect bite (June 26).
- Long, outdoor cafe conversations with hostages Allyn Conwell, Ralf Traugott, and Father James McLoughlin in which they expressed strong sympathy with the Shiites; Conwell indicated these were the group's sentiments (June 27).
- Long, seaside cafe talks with eleven hostages, expressing mixed emotions and frustration. Included pleas for release of the Shiite "hostages" in Israel (June 28).
- Excerpts from *Good Morning America* telephone comments by Conwell and Simon Grossmayer, with Conwell denying sympathy with terrorists (June 28).
- The "farewell party" of most hostages at a restaurant, described by ABC as "courtesy of the captors" and including "fun, food, and phone calls" (June 29).

How were these remarkable interviews presented? What degree of critical scrutiny was used? No journalist would advocate broadcasting a self-interested, public relations press release without alerting viewers and placing it in context. So it is reasonable to expect that the same level of care would be taken with the Amal-arranged interviews in Beirut.

Figure 1

ABC NEWS AIRTIME ALLOCATION, JUNE 14-29, 1985



Among issues that could have been raised were the following: The networks did not know the full circumstances surrounding the interviews; the hostages might have been pressured or fearful; the captors had selected those to be interviewed; the hostages selected to appear before the cameras might have been the ones most willing to support Shiite demands; the hostages might well have been subjected to subtle or overt lobbying on Mideast politics; the possibility of the Stockholm Syndrome, whereby hostages come to identify with their captors; the interviews might have been staged to exploit U.S. television, to attempt to influence public opinion, and to pressure the Reagan administration.

CBS Scrutiny

CBS, as it turned out, did raise most of these questions and did put the interviews in a critical context. Especially during the second week, CBS was scarcely a naive conduit for staged spectacles as some critics have claimed. Consider the way CBS discounted the tape aired on June 24:

> **Dan Rather:** The videotape was made and released by their captors . . . Shiite Muslim kidnappers released the latest videotapes of victims . . .
> **Bill Redeker:** In the scenes recorded three days ago by the Amal at an undisclosed location in West Beirut, twelve of the hostages are shown on camera. However, since the tape has been edited by Amal before being given to CBS News, not all of those shown here will be heard from. Those statements that are included reveal that some of the hostages are extremely reserved and nervous when asked how they feel.

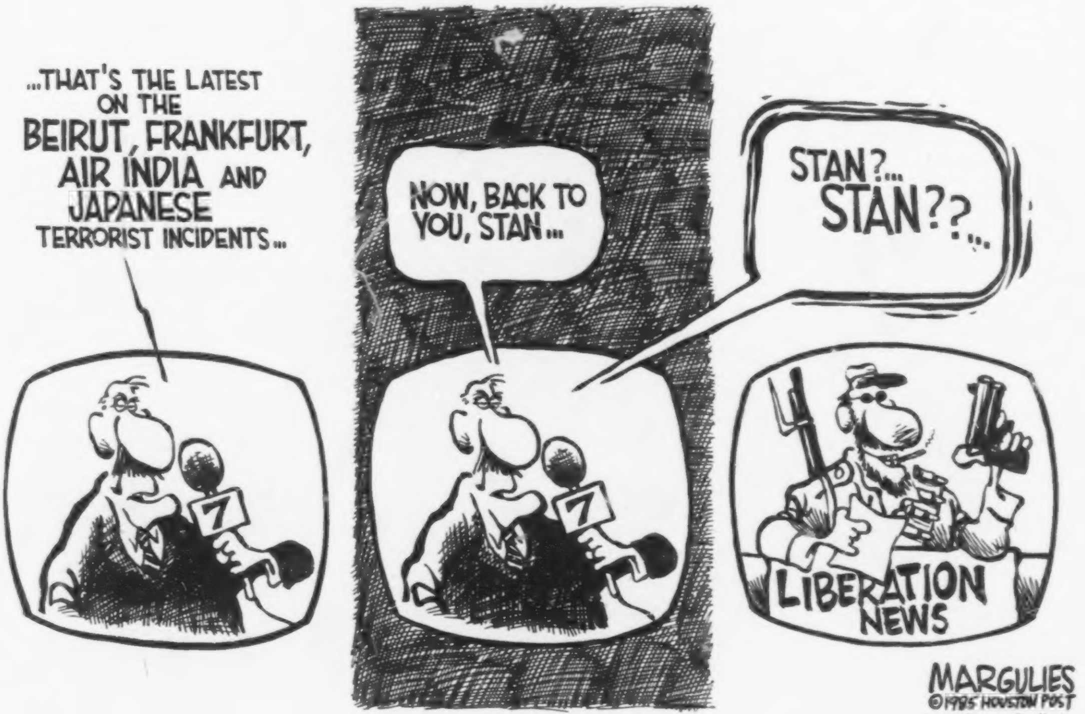
Thus, CBS told people four times that the Amal had made and edited the tape. A voice-over mentioned it yet again while it was shown. Dan Rather and Redeker stressed that the material should be viewed warily. The next segment—a major piece by Tom Fenton—immediately evaluated the psychological pressures on the hostages and explicitly discounted their candor (emphasis added):

> **Tom Fenton:** Once again, some of the hostages have been paraded in front of the cameras. On each occasion, *what you heard was what their captors wanted you to hear.*
> **Hostage:** Without any force, we're free to speak here as we wish.
> **Dr. James Thompson:** You see, *here is someone saying something we know to be untrue.* "Without any force"—I really question that. . . .

Nor did CBS neglect the Amal's motives. In a long story on the subject, Bruce Morton minced no words:

> So Amal is using the hostages and their families and using the American news media to make its case for the release of the Lebanese held in Israel. . . . The media strategies are elaborate. . . (June 27).

When Rather introduced hostage tapes on June 28, he cautioned viewers: "You may want to keep in mind that these men spoke as prisoners." Later in that same newscast, CBS ran two major stories examining the media's role, especially in airing the hostage tapes. The Lesley Stahl segment included the administration's argu-


...THAT'S THE LATEST ON THE BEIRUT, FRANKFURT, AIR INDIA AND JAPANESE TERRORIST INCIDENTS...
NOW, BACK TO YOU, STAN...
STAN?... STAN??...
7
7
LIBERATION NEWS
MARGULIES ©1985 HOUSTON POST
United Feature Syndicate

ment that hostages who failed to echo the Amal line were kept away from the microphones. Susan Spencer's story talked about the captors' efforts to manipulate the media, and both pieces highlighted comments by critics of coverage.

Several other important examples of analytical and cautious CBS work could be cited to illustrate that the *CBS Evening News* raised important questions about the context and candor of the hostage interviews. Moreover, each day CBS seemed to grow more reflective and sensitive to the dilemmas involved in airing the hostage tapes.

ABC Omissions

That was not the case at ABC. *ABC World News Tonight* rarely or never raised critical questions about the interviews they featured. Only once did an ABC reporter on *World News Tonight* endorse the idea that hostage comments might be driven by fear. It came in a brief remark by Richard Threlkeld, who said that "beneath the strained courtesies of this public appearance, you could sense some of that fear and frustration" (June 21). And only once was the audience explicitly told that Amal and not ABC decided which hostages were to be heard, but it was also important to the anchor to note that the story was an ABC "exclusive":

> Three of the hostages, who were chosen by their captors, gave an exclusive interview to ABC correspondent Charles Glass . . . (June 27).

One might have expected ABC reporters to have questioned Mr. Berri's reason for allowing Charles Glass so much selective access. Yet *World News Tonight* mentioned motives only once. Charles Glass suggested that the Amal's intentions might have been humanitarian or might have been meant to influence public opinion:

> Amal may have granted this interview as a gesture to show the American people that the men are well, or they may be trying to use American public opinion . . . (June 28).

On the evening that ABC broadcast lengthy excerpts of videotape that had been delivered to the networks, Peter Jennings made some brief agnostic qualifications about the hostages who were to appear:

> We do not know what additional pressures they may have been under when they were being questioned. . . .
> We do not know . . . the circumstances under which they were interviewed (June 24).

That was it. There were no other instances, even as mild as these, of ABC personnel scrutinizing the credibility or intentions of these interviews. On *World News Tonight*, before ABC's largest audience, the hostage tapes were given top billing, and were left uncontroverted and largely unquestioned. *World News Tonight* never explored the Stockholm Syndrome and never hinted that Mr. Conwell's continued visibility might have had something to do with his usefulness to his captors.

The three and one-half hours of hostage stories on ABC included only three brief instances when *World News Tonight* let its audience hear non-ABC people discounting the interviews. The strongest was paraphrased by anchor Kathleen Sullivan (emphasis hers):

> Henry Kissinger is sharply criticizing news organizations for publicizing statements that *he says* the hostages were *forced* to make by their captors (June 22).

Kissinger was angered that the interviews were broadcast at all. The problem, however, was not that they were aired, but that lengthy segments were broadcast uncritically. Reporters at ABC knew how to discount rhetoric from the president, and they deftly reminded viewers that Reagan typically talks tough and does nothing:

> Some observers say to date his deeds have not matched his words (Barry Serafin, June 18).

Yet *ABC World News Tonight* avoided similar serious analysis of the hostage interviews—so many of which were conducted by ABC's Charles Glass. People who waited around until midnight could have caught some thoughtful exchanges about the candor of the hostage interviews on ABC's outstanding *Nightline*, but of course most viewers had by then gone to bed.

Some impressive, insightful stories did appear on ABC. That network paid more attention to the social and political context of the Beirut hostage seizure than was the case in the early days of the Iran crisis. Stories by Bill Blakemore and by Betsy Aaron set an especially high standard. But despite their strong performances, one significant topic—critical scrutiny of the hostage interviews—was rarely explored by *World News Tonight*.

In the freedom of July, the world learned that Allyn Conwell's favorable remarks about his captors did not represent consensus views, and that conditions in Beirut were far less than "fine" for a number of the hostages. Moreover, as freed hostage James Hoskins told the *New York Times:* "When someone takes control of your life, you tell them what they want to hear." Former captive Richard Herzberg said: "You cannot understand what that means, to know you could be murdered at any minute of the night or day." And Arthur Toga told the *Times:*

> You don't ever bite the hand that feeds you. When a man brings you food every day, you learn to like him. I expect in the next few days I will speak differently than I did at that time.

Amid the calls for news blackouts, it is important to remember that covering up the story is no solution to the dilemmas of covering a hostage crisis. The solution is to cover it, but to do so carefully and critically. ◼

by Terry W. Hartle and John Taylor

What's Big on Campus

President Reagan's wildly enthusiastic reception at North Carolina State University over Labor Day weekend looked like a political campaign event. Cheerleaders pumped up the crowd and Reagan's speech—which made reference to NCSU's dramatic victory in the NCAA basketball tournament several years ago—was regularly interrupted by applause and shouts of approval. The reception in Raleigh was no fluke: Ronald Reagan is very popular with college students. That this undeniably conservative president would be such a hit among young people comes as a surprise to professors, political observers, and all of us who remember campus enthusiasms of a decidedly more liberal bent. Indeed, it was less than twenty years ago that California's college students spearheaded the unsuccessful opposition to unseat the state's governor, Ronald Reagan.

College students have always been an important barometer of American politics: They are tomorrow's opinion makers and influence leaders, so their values provide a hint of their future political attitudes. Students are among the first to embrace new trends, sometimes transforming college campuses into arenas where social changes are played out. It's no surprise that the media have kept a close watch on college students over the past two decades. During the Vietnam War, evening newscasts regularly reported on student protests and heralded the emergence of a new political force in American society. Today, the media have turned their attention to the growing conservatism of young Americans. The swing in college students' attitudes may look neat and obvious on our television screens, but the evidence indicates that their mood is actually quite complicated—just as it was a decade ago. Today's campus mood defies easy categorization.

Voting Patterns

The most important measure of students' political attitudes is their vote in presidential elections. Unfortunately, no data exist on the voting patterns of college students as a group, but we do have extensive data on the preferences of young people as a whole. Because college students are a large percentage of this population, these results can give us a rough indication of changing values.

The liberal reputation of American youth was largely a product of student activism during the 1960s and 1970s. Election returns suggest that college students were indeed somewhat more liberal than the rest of American society at that time. As table 1 illustrates, Gallup polls revealed that in Nixon's 1972 landslide, 50 percent of those eighteen to twenty-nine years old voted for Democratic candidate George McGovern (compared with 41 percent of the electorate as a whole). Similarly, Jimmy Carter drew his strongest support from young people in both his bids for the presidency.

This pattern changed in 1984. A *Time*/Yankelovich, Skelly and White survey in early October showed eighteen to twenty-four year olds favoring Reagan over Mondale by a margin of forty-five points, 63 percent to 18 percent—a gap almost ten points wider than in any other age bracket. *Time* magazine reported that young people were registering Republican over Democratic at a ratio of two-to-one. Because voters rarely change their party affiliation, these registration patterns led people to speculate about radical alterations in the balance between the two parties. As Lee Atwater, President Reagan's deputy campaign manager, said, "All voter studies I've read indicate that the first-time vote is crucial in determining voting patterns for the rest of your life." Anticipating a windfall, Republicans redoubled efforts to capitalize on their newfound constituency. Their success is well documented. Young people voted for Reagan by three-to-two.

While the 41 percent of eighteen to twenty-four year olds who voted for Mondale is hardly a figure Democrats can be happy about, it is far better than the 18 percent intended vote in the October *Time*/Yankelovich poll. Instead of being the most pro-Reagan age group, under-twenty-five voters in NBC's exit poll were the second weakest age group in the Reagan vote. Only voters in the twenty-five to thirty-four year old group cast fewer votes for the president.

These results indicate a conservative shift among young people, but with an important qualification. Value changes among young adults often reflect value changes in the society at large. The legacy of the Great Society has been tempered by more realistic expectations of what government can accomplish. It is unreasonable to believe that young people today would place the same faith in government action as did those fifteen years ago. In fact, the most pro-Mondale age group, the twenty-five to thirty-four year old voters, cast 56 percent of their ballots for Reagan in 1984. These were the students of the early 1970s who shaped our views of student activism.

A more accurate way to assess young voters' shift to the right is to examine changes in their voting patterns alongside those of the population at large. Table 1 shows that in 1972, under-thirty voters supported McGovern by a full fifteen points more than any other age group. This gap has narrowed considerably. Young voters were the most liberal by margins of only two points in 1976 and four points in 1980. In the 1984 election, the 41 percent Mondale vote among eighteen to twenty-four year olds equaled the percentage of support for the Democrats in the society as a whole. In short, claims that voting patterns of young adults have become more conservative are true. Whether this portends a long-term political bonanza for the Republicans depends on a broader set of attitudes about politics, the economy, and social welfare.

While election results provide an excellent snapshot of young people's opinions, a more complete picture comes from survey data. The most important source of this information about student attitudes is the annual survey of freshmen at America's colleges and universities directed by Alexander Astin at the University of California at Los Angeles. This widely watched project has surveyed college freshmen at a sample of the nation's schools for the last nineteen years.

College students' ideological identification confirms what voting patterns suggest—they are less liberal than they were just over a decade ago. The percentage of students who consider themselves liberal has fallen steadily from 37 percent in 1970 to 22 percent in 1984. Although liberals might have nightmares about hordes of young people quoting George Will (or even James J. Kilpatrick), their worst fears might not be realized. Surprisingly enough, conservative self-identification shows only a slight increase from 18 percent in 1970 to 21 percent in 1984. Meanwhile, the percentage of students who describe themselves as middle-of-the-road rose steadily from 45 percent in 1970 to 60 percent in 1980, before declining to 57 percent in 1984.

If we compare college students to the adult population as a whole, the shift in political identification becomes much more apparent (see table 2). The current percentage of liberals on college campuses is now roughly the same as that in the population as a whole, although there are considerably fewer conservatives on campuses than in the broader society.

Each generation of young Americans faces different issues that help shape its political concerns. For two decades, these were the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War. Today, economic uncertainty is the most

Table 1

VOTING PATTERNS BY AGE

1972			1976	
Nixon	**McGovern**	**Age**	**Carter**	**Ford**
50%	50%	18-29	52%	48%
65	35	30-44	50	50
65	35	45-59	47	53
71	29	60 and over	47	53

Source: 1972, Gallup Organization; 1976, CBS News/*New York Times.*

1980				1984	
Reagan	**Carter**	**Anderson**	**Age**	**Reagan**	**Mondale**
44%	44%	12%	18-24	59%	41%
47	41	12	25-34	56	44
56	37	7	35-49	61	39
54	41	5	50-64	60	40
55	39	6	65 and over	61	39

Source: NBC News.

Table 2

POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF ENTERING COLLEGE FRESHMEN

	1970	1973	1976	197[illegible]	1982	1984
Liberal	37%	35%	28%	25%	21%	22%
Middle-of-the-road	45	51	56	5[illegible]	60	57
Conservative	18	15	16	[illegible]8	19	21

Source: *American Freshmen: National Norms for Fall . . .* Cooperative Institutional Research Program, American Council on Education and the University of California, Los Angeles, latest that of 1984.

important issue. Most observers believe that concerns about economic security are at the heart of the new mood on college campuses.

Students in the 1960s and 1970s assumed that their education would guarantee them a generous slice of the American economic pie, but today's students know that a degree no longer guarantees a good job. Many fear that the upper middle-class lifestyle they have always expected may not come to be.

Faced with intense competition for good positions, many students have adopted a pragmatic approach to their education. That the current emphasis on economic realities has affected student attitudes is illustrated by data from the Astin survey. In 1984, 68 percent of students said that a "very important" reason for attending college was "to be able to make more money"; in 1971, 50 percent felt that way. At the same time, college students have higher expectations than ever before, and their goals are becoming more self-oriented. Seventy-one percent of college freshmen in 1984 believed that "being very well-off financially" is a very important goal, up from 39 percent in 1970. Other life goals showing increases included being an authority in one's field and obtaining peer recognition. Equally intriguing are the objectives that have become less popular. Interest in "developing a meaningful life philosophy," for example, has fallen from 76 percent in 1970 to 45 percent in 1984.

Given the emphasis on economic success, it is hardly surprising that business careers are exceptionally popular. The long lines for job interviews with major corporations seem destined to get longer: A record 18 percent of college freshmen now aspire to business careers, double the 1970 figure. Other careers that carry the promise of status and material success, such as accounting, engineering, law, and medicine, are also popular choices. The careers that involve service or that are likely to offer low wages are less coveted. Careers in education are selected by just 6 percent of today's college students compared to 20 percent in 1970. The number of freshmen seeking careers in social work or the clergy is also minuscule.

Table 3

PROBABLE CAREER CHOICE

	1970	1984
Business	11%	18%
Engineering	8	10
Accounting/actuary	NA	6
Medicine/dentistry	4	5
Law	4	4
Education	20	6
Social work	NA	1
Clergy	1	.2

Note: NA = not asked.

Source: *American Freshmen: National Norms for Fall* . . . Cooperative Institutional Research Program, American Council on Education and the University of California, Los Angeles, latest that of 1984.

Given this picture, it is easy to understand why today's students take a hard line on economic issues. They know that a thriving economy means more jobs and more money, so the majority of students support policies that promise to help stimulate economic growth. Issues of economic fairness often take a back seat.

Attitudes on Social Issues

Concern with economic realities encourages students to take a somewhat different stance on many social issues as well, such as extramarital sex, the legalization of marijuana and abortion. In the early 1970s, 68 percent of college students believed that extramarital sex is always or almost always wrong, but this percentage rose to 85 percent in the early 1980s, according to studies by the National Opinion Research Center. Support for the legalization of marijuana has dropped from 38 percent in 1970 to 23 percent in 1984. In the Astin study, support for legalized abortion has shown a 29 percentage point drop (83 percent to 54 percent) from 1970 to 1984. This may reflect the fact that although wording of the Astin question has not changed during the period, the legal status of abortion has. Students may reason that abortion is already legal, and not feel compelled to respond as they did in 1970. Daniel Yankelovich has called student attitudes "a bit more hard-boiled. . . . Not soft, not idealistic, but anti-permissive and pro-discipline."

This is also evident in student opinions about affirmative action. The number of students supporting preferential college admissions for disadvantaged students declined from 44 percent in 1970 to 37 percent in 1984. While students continue to support equal opportunity, they appear less willing to give the disadvantaged an edge in competitive situations. This shift is, of course, consistent with changes in overall public opinion on these questions.

Students also take a harder line on issues such as capital punishment and criminal rights. Two-thirds of today's college students favor the death penalty, up from 35 percent approval in the early 1970s. In the same vein, 69 percent of students believe that the courts show too much concern for the rights of criminals (versus 52 percent in 1970). The shift in opinions about capital punishment again illustrates that students now align themselves more closely with values of the larger society. "The general population has supported the death penalty fairly steadily," says Yankelovich. "So the young people—particularly the college-educated—have emerged from a subculture into the country at large."

In foreign policy, many students take hard line positions on communism and the need for a strong defense. According to 1982 surveys conducted by Gerald Bachman at the University of Michigan, 62 percent of high school seniors felt the United States needs military strength greater than or equal to the Soviet Union. By contrast, 52 percent thought so in 1975. Although student support for increased defense spending has waned in the last few years (from 39 percent in 1982 to 33 percent in 1984), this may reflect a belief that our level of strength is now sufficient.

Table 4

STUDENTS ARE MORE CONSERVATIVE ON SOME ISSUES . . .

	1970	1976	1980	1982	1984
Agree strongly or somewhat:					
Abortion should be legalized	83%	NA	54%	55%	54%
Marijuana should be legalized	38	49	39	29	23
Students from disadvantaged social backgrounds should be given preferential treatment in college admissions	44	37	34	36	37
The death penalty should be abolished	56	NA	35	28	26
There is too much concern in the courts for the rights of criminals	52	60	66	69	NA
College grades should be abolished	44	21	16	15	14
Divorce laws should be liberalized	52	NA	46	45	NA

Note: NA = not asked.

Source: *American Freshmen: National Norms for Fall* . . . Cooperative Institutional Research Program, American Council on Education and the University of California, Los Angeles, latest that of 1984.

On the Other Hand

On many subjects today's young adults take different positions from their early 1970s counterparts, but the legacies of the sixties and seventies are still apparent. Although their support has decreased in recent years, a large majority of college students still approve of *more* government action on consumer protection, pollution control, and energy conservation by 62 percent, 78 percent, and 73 percent, respectively. While many students hope to acquire wealth of their own, over two-thirds of college freshmen still think the wealthy should pay more taxes than they do now (a percentage that has barely changed over the past 12 years).

Students are more liberal than ever on women's rights. Only 22 percent of college students today believe that the activities of married women are best confined to home and family (compared to 48 percent in 1970), and 92 percent agree that women should receive the same salaries and opportunity for advancement as men in comparable positions, up from 81 percent in 1970.

Student support for a national health care plan "to cover everybody's medical costs" has reached a record 61 percent, a view that perhaps results from extensive media coverage of skyrocketing health care costs.

Surprisingly enough, support for busing to achieve school integration reached an all-time high of 54 percent in 1984. This may appear inconsistent with their declining support for preferred admissions for disadvantaged college applicants, but students may see busing as a necessity for equality of opportunity, whereas affirmative action may look like a system of unearned rewards. It is also possible that the students support busing because they are not affected by it—either as pupils or as parents would be—yet affirmative action in college admissions touches them personally.

Table 5

BUT THEY HAVE RETAINED LIBERAL VIEWS ON OTHERS

	1970	1976	1980	1982	1984
Agree strongly or somewhat:					
The federal government is not doing enough to protect the consumer from faulty goods and services	NA	74%	75%	69%	62%
The federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution	NA	82	80	79	78
The federal government should do more to discourage energy consumption	NA	80	83	78	73
Wealthy people should pay a larger share of taxes than they do now	NA	76	70	72	70
The activities of married women are best confined to home and family	48	28	27	26	22
Women should receive the same salary and opportunities for advancement as men in comparable positions	81	92	93	93	92
A national health care plan is needed to cover everybody's medical costs	NA	NA	58	58	61
Busing is OK if it helps to achieve racial balance in the schools	NA	37	46	47	54
College officials have the right to ban persons with extreme views from speaking on campus	33	25	26	25	22

Note: NA = not asked.

Source: *American Freshmen: National Norms for Fall* . . . Cooperative Institutional Research Program, American Council on Education and the University of California, Los Angeles, latest that of 1984.

Despite apparent enthusiasm for a tougher foreign policy, nearly two-thirds of college freshmen believe that the federal government is not doing enough to promote disarmament. They also show a marked tendency toward isolationism. Seventy-four percent of high school seniors in 1982 agreed that the only good reason for the United States to go to war is to defend against an attack on our own country, up from 66 percent in 1975. In the same 1982 poll, nearly half the students believed the United States should never go to war to protect the rights of other countries (compared to 37 percent in 1975).

What the Evidence Means: A Sorting Out of Values

Taken together, the opinion data suggest that today's college students are somewhat more conservative than their counterparts in the early 1970s, but theirs is an amalgam of views and opinions that defies easy categorization. Indeed, students do not identify themselves as conservative in the traditional sense; almost 60 percent of college freshmen describe themselves as moderates. What we see is a mixture of traditional and liberal values welded together by economic pragmatism.

In an interview with *Public Opinion* last year, Daniel Yankelovich provided an excellent framework for interpreting the attitudes of today's college students.

Yankelovich described the central theme of the 1960s and 1970s as an effort to find a place for the expressive side of the self—a rebellion against the rigid conformity of the 1950s. In the 1980s, Americans are sorting out the results of this rebellion, hoping to retain a place for personal expression while reining in the excesses of the last two decades. Today's college students, of course, have no personal points of reference with the social and political attitudes of the 1950s and 1960s. But they are no doubt heavily influenced by the broader changes that are working their way through our society.

In the 1950s, college students eagerly sought secure careers in major companies. Later, college students shunned such jobs and ran some corporate recruiters off campus. Today, many students once again are looking to the corporate world as the path to success. This does not mean that becoming the organization man in the grey flannel suit is the only way to go. According to Yankelovich, important goals for businessmen today include "autonomy, creativity, and adventure. Entrepreneurship has been redefined to focus on the expressive side of life."

The materialistic values of today's students may also be a reflection of the need for personal expression. Students who enter the fast-paced business world of the 1980s may feel they lack the time to pursue artistic work or start a family, so they need other channels for expressing personal creativity. For some, the acquisition of material possessions and the cultivation of "style" act as expressions of their unique identity.

The sorting-out process also involves reexamining the social policy goals sought in recent years, and in some cases students seem to have decided that the means used to achieve the ends went too far. But students have not abandoned the goals entirely, even if they doubt the methods used to reach them. Thus, they still support such things as environmental protection, civil rights, and equal opportunity. Students still believe that criminal suspects deserve protection under the law, but they wonder whether the courts pay more attention to criminal rights than to those of the victim.

The notion of sorting out the values of the last three decades does help put students' attitudes in the proper perspective. Their apparent conservative shift does not necessarily signify a full-scale retreat from liberal values, but a subordination of many of these values to concerns about economic security. Although a dramatic event such as the use of military force in Central America could change this, students are willing to accept policies they disagree with in other areas as long as they see current economic policies working to advance their interests.

The affluence of the 1960s ensured that jobs would be available after graduation. Without such security, students treat political involvement as a luxury they cannot afford. Given the crowded job market and their materialistic goals, students must focus their energies on impressing prospective employers. According to Richard Beery, a campus psychologist at the University of California at Berkeley, students are resigned to working within the system. They feel "if I can't change the system, I have to at least ensure my place in it." Thus, we see a zone of political indifference in which the only salient political value for many students is a stable economic environment in which to pursue material success.

The Reagan administration has, of course, offered a philosophy that appeals to students concerned about economic security. "[Young people] like the kind of notions that Reagan gets across, like growth and job opportunity. They're rejecting this whole idea of limits, that somehow the pie is getting smaller," said Republican pollster Robert Teeter. Reagan's faith in the free enterprise system helps some students to believe that they can meet their civic obligations by pursuing their self-interest.

In addition to his economic optimism, President Reagan has set a positive tone for the future. His emphasis on "America standing tall" has enabled students to feel good about their country without being asked to make great sacrifices. Little wonder that college students (and the rest of us) like him. Appreciation for Reagan's leadership is heightened when students compare it to the weak and vacillating guidance they associate with Jimmy Carter. Not surprisingly, students, like the rest of American society, now express more confidence in governmental institutions.

Confidence in Reagan's leadership is not necessarily the result of a detailed knowledge of the choices confronting our society. Today's students know the civil rights movement, Vietnam, and Watergate only as dim memories, if they know them at all. And their interest in current political and world affairs appears minimal: Only 38 percent of college freshmen in 1984 said that keeping up with political affairs is an important goal (compared to 53 percent in 1970).

Students support Reagan's no-nonsense ideas about foreign affairs, but are skeptical of policies that could lead to long-term involvement. Enthusiasm is high for quick and relatively painless displays of force like the Grenada invasion, but it is less clear that students would support more sustained military involvement. In short, the attitude seems to be: keep us strong, but don't involve me.

College students can support a military build-up while calling for more action on arms control. Such attitudes may also spoil Republican hopes for a major party realignment. Although young people registered Republican in great numbers for the 1984 election, they may not be strongly committed to the GOP. As Everett Ladd suggests, it may be that party identification has been transformed so that "it is no longer a deep underlying commitment, but a more casual, easily changeable reaction to current events." There is, it would seem, good reason for conservatives to be pleased with the current attitudes on college campuses, but by no means should they be overconfident.

by Harmon Zeigler and Keith Poole

Political Woman: Gender Indifference

When it became obvious on election day that between 54 and 55 percent of American women were casting their ballots for Ronald Reagan, Barbara Walters was moved to conclude that it was time to give up on the idea of a "women's vote." She meant that women, like men, base their electoral decisions upon a variety of factors, one of which *may* be equality of the sexes. It seems odd that 1984 was the moment she chose to reach that decision—the first presidential election with a woman on a major party ticket. The Democrats were counting on women to make a difference. Geraldine Ferraro's last-minute prediction that a "hidden women's vote" would elect Walter Mondale was an echo of Barry Goldwater's equally unrealistic expectation that a hidden conservative vote would elect him in 1964.

Others were not quite so philosophical as Ms. Walters. Women's organization leaders were blamed by Mondale workers for failing to "deliver their sisters." Others argued that had Mondale focused his campaign more squarely upon women's rights ("empowerment"), he might have improved his performance among women. Had anyone troubled to look at women's behavior for the past decade, no one would have been foolhardy enough to promise them to either party. The women's vote in 1984 was, rather than any testimony to Reagan's skill or Mondale's lack of it, simply one more illustration of the difference between leaders and followers.

Table 1

ATTITUDES TOWARD AN EQUAL ROLE FOR WOMEN: 1972-1984

Question: Recently, there has been a lot of talk about women's rights. Some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running business, industry, and government. Others feel that women's place is in the home. (Egalitarian, point 1, Traditional, point 7) Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

	1972	1974	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984
Employed Women							
1 (Egalitarian)	38%	40%	37%	49%	40%	47%	43%
2, 3	16	19	26	19	29	23	26
4 (Neutral)	25	21	19	16	16	17	20
5, 6	9	12	12	9	9	9	9
7 (Traditional)	13	8	6	7	5	5	3
Housewives							
1 (Egalitarian)	25%	21%	24%	26%	27%	29%	22%
2, 3	14	19	13	15	27	18	16
4 (Neutral)	21	23	25	24	17	19	30
5, 6	11	17	16	17	18	14	18
7 (Traditional)	29	20	23	18	12	19	14

Employed Women and Housewives

By selecting a woman as his running mate, Walter Mondale put his money where his mouth was. As in his relationship with organized labor, he believed (or at least hoped) that interest group *leaders* could deliver the votes of their members. He discovered, however, that there is a vast difference between leaders and followers, and candidates who assume that endorsements can be cashed in for votes are making a serious mistake. Had Mondale understood women's past preferences, he would have been forced to conclude that, whatever his running mate's abilities, delivering a bloc vote was not among them.

Feminist organizations have traditionally attracted employed, educated, upwardly mobile women. Each year there are more such women, but it is still true that a substantial number of women do not fit that description. Contrary to what leaders of the feminist movement might have us believe, not all women share common interests or commitments.

Since 1972, men and women have been asked by the University of Michigan's election surveys to place themselves along a seven-point scale intended to assess their commitment to women's equality. Accordingly, those who placed themselves at position one agreed that "women and men should have an equal role," and those who placed themselves at position seven believed that "a woman's place is in the home." We divided the sample into two categories: those women who were employed outside the home and "housewives" (defined as women who had no outside employment and who identified themselves as housewives). As the accompanying table suggests, employed women are much more egalitarian than housewives (see table 1). The gap between them demonstrates clearly that the experience of work is associated with a stronger belief in sexual equality as defined by Michigan's question. Yet even among employed women, the progress toward strong feminist beliefs has not been consistent. The peaks and valleys between 1972 and 1984 may indicate that the question is not especially important to them. In any case, we suggest that getting a job does liberate women from tradi-

Table 2

ATTITUDES TOWARD AN EQUAL ROLE FOR WOMEN: 1972-1984

(Percent most egalitarian)

	1972	1974	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984
Employed Women							
By education:							
High school	32%	33%	29%	44%	29%	45%	33%
Some college	42	46	48	53	51	43	47
College graduate	49	55	53	64	59	58	63
Housewives							
By education:							
High school	23%	18%	21%	24%	22%	26%	19%
Some college	30	37	31	26	42	35	27
College graduate	41	29	31	41	42	38	33

tional sex roles. The wonder is that most employed women are not in the *most* egalitarian category.

Housewives, while far less egalitarian than employed women, have nevertheless begun to find the most traditional, least liberated option less attractive. Note also that the percentage of women identifying themselves as housewives has declined substantially. The percentage of women who are employed, however, seems to be holding steady, corroborating recent Census data that indicate the rate of female participation in the work force is slowing down.

Widening the Gap

If we add the influence of education to the equality equation, the gap between housewives and employed women becomes even larger (see table 2). It is difficult to imagine a chasm larger than the one that exists between college-educated employed women and housewives with only a high school education. Judging by the Democratic ticket's campaign pitch, this former group was the one Mondale and Ferraro bumped into on their way to losing the election. Employed women with college degrees are the *most* egalitarian (indeed, they are the only group of women with a majority responding in the most egalitarian category). Housewives with a high school education are the least.

Chances are slim that people with such different views of life, and little more in common than their gender, would vote as a bloc. Women do not—and cannot be expected to—share attitudes when their circumstances differ so markedly. Shared attitudes are a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for cohesive political activity.

Why the Gender Gap Was an Illusion

If their sentiments about equality are so different, do women who work and women who don't, vote differently as well? Judging from the past, they do. While numerous observers have pointed out similarities between men's and women's voting patterns, and though many analysts have offered opinions on Reagan's once troublesome "women problem," few have noted the differences between housewives and employed women. Until 1980, employed women voted for Democratic presidential candidates at a rate of about 10 percent more than did housewives, but in 1980 Reagan garnered about one-half of the votes of employed women, to 40 percent for Carter. College-educated employed women gave Reagan a 47 to 35 percent advantage in 1980.

Table 3

WOMEN'S VOTE FOR REAGAN—1984

	1984	
	Employed Women	*Housewives*
1 (Egalitarian)	47%	55%
2, 3	60	57
4 (Neutral)	67	75
5, 6	52	88
7 (Traditional)	73	67

In the years after his 1980 victory, Reagan thoroughly alienated the leadership of feminist organizations, who hadn't been too crazy about him to begin. They endorsed neither candidate in 1980 but put their money and their enthusiasm behind Mondale in 1984. This did nothing to diminish college-educated employed women's support for Reagan. He received 47 percent of their vote just as he had in 1980.

Among those employed women who were strong egalitarians, Reagan drew only slightly less than his Democratic opponent in both elections (see table 3). He won a solid majority of the votes of all groups of women except the most egalitarian employed women, and with them he achieved more success than his opponents expected. Why would women who are strongly committed to equality vote for a candidate said to be insensitive to the issue? They would do so for the same reasons as other people.

Women, like men, do not always translate a preference into a vote. Reagan did generate less enthusiasm among women than among men during his first administration, but once the second campaign began, women voters appeared only slightly less supportive of him than men did (the exception was a brief flurry after the Democratic convention). It is true, of course, that a gap of between 4 and 9 percent (depending upon the poll) existed between men and women who supported Reagan. It is also true that women were more likely to support Democratic congressional candidates than were men (as had been the case in 1980 and 1982), and that women were more likely than men to call themselves Democrats. But the hard fact is that women—even the educated, employed women considered by feminist organizations to be a natural constituency—gave Reagan a majority.

Results like these have to be explained by something more substantial than Reagan's ease with the media or Mondale's unease with it. In fact, there is more difference between the attitudes of employed women and housewives than there is between men and women. On twelve of twenty issues measured by the Survey Research Center between 1972 and 1982, the gaps between these two kinds of women exceeded the differences between women and men, particularly when questions had to do with sex equity. These women were not necessarily ignoring or objecting to the active feminists' pleas. They simply cared more about issues other than "women's issues." In 1980, employed women ranked issues of sexual equity below defense spending and a tax cut in importance. Employed women are more worried about economic growth in general than about ensuring they receive their share of it. So, any attempt to focus the campaign upon equity issues was pointless.

The behavior of women in 1984 was neither a tribute to Reagan's skill nor a condemnation of Mondale's distaste for television. It was simply one more illustration of the difference between leaders and followers. ☑

by Barbara G. Farah and Elda Vale

Crime: A Tale of Two Cities

New Yorkers and Los Angelenos may not always see eye-to-eye, but they do agree about the major problem facing their cities: crime. Regardless of their race, gender, economic well-being, or party identification, for these city dwellers living a continent apart, crime is the overriding concern. Moreover, they concur on the best methods for reducing crime.

Forty-five percent of the people polled regarded crime as the most important problem confronting their city today, according to separate surveys conducted by the *New York Times* and CBS News in New York City, and by KCBS-TV in Los Angeles in the first quarter of 1985. Crime was also chosen by a large majority of New Yorkers in a *New York Times* poll conducted in January 1985. When asked to choose among crime, public transportation, housing, and the public schools, half the people mentioned only crime, and an additional 10 percent chose crime along with one of the other problems.[1]

Concern about crime in New York City stems, in part, from the relatively high level of victimization in this metropolitan area. Nearly three out of ten people interviewed by the *Times* said that within the past year, they or some member of their family had been a victim. Four months later, the *Times*/CBS News poll found the same levels. In both surveys, the proportion of victims was the same for whites and minorities and for upper- as well as lower-income city residents.

The crimes mentioned by New Yorkers included personal assaults, burglaries, and murder. Half of the people who were victims said they or a family member had been robbed, mugged, had a purse snatched, or a pocket picked. In addition, a little over one-third of them stated that their home had been burglarized or their car stolen.

When asked in the *Times*/CBS News poll about what types of crime worried them the most, close to half of the New Yorkers interviewed said they feared robbery and mugging, 12 percent worried most about murder, another 12 percent cited crimes in the subways, and 8 percent mentioned being most afraid of rape. Not unexpectedly, among the victims of crime polled, the type of crime feared most was strongly related to the crime they or a family member had experienced.

But the type of crime people worry about also depends to a large degree on the race and ethnicity of the person. While half of the white respondents said they feared being robbed or mugged, only 38 percent of the blacks and 30 percent of the Hispanics felt this way. Twice as many blacks as whites, however—17 percent to 9 percent—worried most about being murdered or shot. Hispanics were nearly twice as likely as whites or blacks to say they feared subway crimes.

Anxiety about the subways may have been heightened in the *Times*/CBS News poll, since that survey followed four months of intensive press attention paid to the Bernhard Goetz incident. Goetz, a white subway rider, touched off a nationwide debate over vigilantism when he shot four black teenagers who had demanded money from him on a subway.

Two weeks after the subway shootings, 52 percent in the *Times'* New York City poll said they supported Goetz, with whites most supportive and blacks least supportive of him. But just four months later, in the *Times*/CBS News poll, Goetz's overall support among New Yorkers had diminished to 43 percent of all the people surveyed. Most of this drop in support is accounted for by the changes in opinion among blacks. In January, 45 percent of the blacks had thought Goetz was justified in taking matters into his own hands; by April only 23 percent thought his actions were warranted.

Table 1

ACTIONS THAT WOULD HELP A LOT TO REDUCE CRIME

Question: I'm going to read you a list of things some people think might help reduce crime. For each of them, would you please tell me if you think they would help a lot, help a little, or not make any difference?

	White	Black	Hispanic
Putting more police on foot patrol and fewer in squad cars			
NYC	56%	63%	68%
Hiring more police			
LA	54	56	71
More neighborhood anti-crime patrols			
NYC	65	70	76
LA	69	70	71
More job training programs for young people			
NYC	68	87	82
LA	65	85	81
More drug rehabilitation programs			
NYC	50	57	69
LA	52	59	64
The death penalty			
NYC	48	41	50
LA	57	46	63
Better schools			
NYC	70	75	86
LA	68	80	78

Note: Overall responses were, in order: 59%, 56%, 68%, 69%, 75%, 72%, 55%, 55%, 47%, 56%, 74%, and 72%.

Where East Meets West

Even though New York and Los Angeles are very different, their residents support similar remedies to deter crime. People interviewed in both cities were more willing than not to feel that *all* solutions offered to them by the pollsters would help a lot (see table 1). Blacks and Hispanics were, with one exception, even more convinced of this than were whites, whose convictions were quite strong. The death penalty offered the only contrast, and on that proposal fewer blacks than either whites or Hispanics believed it would help a lot.

Hiring more police as a solution to L.A.'s crime problem was embraced by fewer people than all but one of the other remedies. This even though it had been a major campaign issue in the Los Angeles mayoral race and had been the subject of a great deal of media attention. (Both candidates favored hiring more police.) Fifty-nine percent of New Yorkers endorsed a similar proposition —"putting more police on foot patrol and fewer in squad cars"—that was far more appropriate to dense New York than to sprawling L.A.

Only on the death penalty did Los Angelenos and New Yorkers hold markedly different views: 56 percent of the registered voters in Los Angeles felt that the death penalty would do a lot to reduce crime in their city, while slightly less than half of the residents polled in New York City, 47 percent, felt that way.

The concern about crime expressed by residents of the two major metropolitan cities, though serious, falls far short of driving them to abandon these urban centers. In fact, just the opposite seems to be true. When people were asked if they would prefer to be living in the city where they now live, or would prefer to live elsewhere, more than half of the residents polled in each city said they wanted to remain where they were, crime or no crime.

---

[1] The CBS News/*New York Times* telephone survey, conducted in New York City between April 27 and May 3, 1985 had 1,557 respondents. KCBS-TV of Los Angeles conducted its telephone survey with 975 registered voters between February 14 and 18, 1985. The *New York Times* survey of New York City interviewed 1,329 residents by telephone between January 5 and 10 of this year. The margin of error for the two New York City surveys was plus or minus 3 percentage points, and for the Los Angeles poll, plus or minus 4 percentage points based on the total sample. The margin of error is slightly larger for any subgroups.

To ensure that comparisons between registered voters in Los Angeles and all residents in New York City were comparable, the analyses of the two New York City polls were also run for registered voters only. The results indicate that in no instance was there a difference between registered voters and all residents that amounted to more than 1 percent.

Lichter

(Continued from page 44)

dilemma that goes to the heart of the role of political leadership. Some may argue that the essence of leadership often involves adopting policies and ideas that may at times contradict the wishes of those they are intended to benefit. Others may argue that leaders should represent the views of their constituents, even if they run counter to their own.

In summary, we found considerable distance on many controversial issues between the average black person and the leaders of those groups the media most often recognize as the voice of black America. Yet, in assessing the role of America's black leadership, there are several important factors to consider that may slip through the cracks of survey questions. Many of the black leaders that we surveyed played a crucial role in America's quest to rid itself of long-entrenched institutional racism. Some of these leaders risked their lives in fighting to secure the political rights that others may now take for granted. If three decades of civil rights struggles have produced some schisms among whites, blacks, and their leaders, they have also fostered a principle deserving of unqualified and universal acceptance—that the concerns of black America should be America's concerns.

---

[1] I am deeply grateful to S. Robert Lichter and William C. Adams for their generous assistance with this research.

[2] Two whites were included in our sample. They were interviewed because they occupy positions of influence in these organizations.

Schneider

(Continued from page 11)

dential sources in order to provide evidence in a criminal trial; and court-imposed fines in cases of biased or inaccurate stories. While professional journalists no doubt find such responses shocking, they are more likely based on common sense than on antipathy toward the press. In fact, none of these restrictions is endorsed by a sizable majority. And in cases involving direct censorship by government—preventing the media from publishing or broadcasting stories, barring the press from foreign military operations—the public tends to side with the press.

Thus, many criticisms of the press boil down to differences between professional and lay perspectives. Where the public feels competent to judge, it expresses a strong measure of confidence in the press. In areas where the public does not feel fully competent to judge, a certain amount of skepticism is natural, and healthy. Do we really want people to believe everything they read in the papers?

The Press Passes

We can find groups with noticeably higher levels of disgruntlement. Surprisingly, conservatives are not among them. The *Los Angeles Times* poll shows very little difference between liberals and conservatives in their evaluations of the media. Sixty percent of liberals and 63 percent of conservatives gave their own newspaper a very good rating. Twenty-seven percent of liberals and 26 percent of conservatives gave a very good rating to the news media as a whole. Conservatives described the news media as liberal rather than conservative by a margin of 22 percentage points; so did liberals, by a margin of 19 points. Ideology seems to make little difference in people's views of the media.

The ASNE study identified two groups that had problems with media credibility. One was the "less well informed and suspicious." These were people with low education and incomes, limited media usage, and little interest in the news. They tended to be suspicious of the press and resentful of its power and influence.

Their complaints about the press were not so much ideological as anti-establishment. The "less well informed and suspicious," according to the ASNE report, "tended to view the media as an establishment institution that attempts to use its knowledge and power to its own ends." They suspected that the news media "may be propagandizing for the establishment and trying to sway them toward its point of view." The proper label for such criticism is populist, not conservative.

The other disgruntled constituency was described by the ASNE report as "sophisticated skeptics." These critics were just the opposite of the "less well educated and suspicious"; they were well educated, had high incomes, and inclined toward heavy use of the media and a strong interest in public affairs. "For sophisticated skeptics," the report indicated, "familiarity with the media may breed contempt." It was in this group that one found complaints about bias, inaccuracy, and negativism. They offered "sophisticated" criticism because they tended to be knowledgeable about the ways of the press, often from first-hand experience.

The *Los Angeles Times* study was not able to confirm the ASNE findings about "less well-informed and suspicious" readers. Lower-income readers and less well-educated readers were consistently less critical of their newspaper and of the media in general. Nor were less attentive readers significantly more critical.

On the other hand, there was some evidence to indicate the presence of the ASNE study's "sophisticated skeptics." The data showed a negative correlation between education and confidence in the news media (see table 7). College-educated respondents were less likely to give a very good grade to their own newspaper or the media as a whole. They were more critical of newspaper accuracy and impartiality. Moreover, in a replication of the findings of the ASNE study, "'sophisticated skeptics' were more likely than others to say that their papers are more 'conservative' or more 'liberal,' . . . a few more saying more 'liberal' than said more 'conservative.'" As table 7 indicates, this was especially true in their assessment of the media as a whole.

Table 7

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE NEWS MEDIA BY EDUCATION

Ratings of your own newspaper	**Less than high school**	**High school graduates**	**College-educated**
Overall job			
Very good	75%	64%	59%
Fairly good	21	32	37
Bad	3	4	4
Accuracy			
Very good	49	39	30
Fairly good	43	54	59
Bad	7	7	10
Impartiality			
Very good	42	29	22
Fairly good	44	58	57
Bad	6	12	19
Political bias			
Liberal	20	24	31
Conservative	16	25	28
Ratings of the news media generally			
Overall job			
Very good	44	26	22
Fairly good	51	68	70
Bad	3	3	7
Political bias			
Liberal	24	29	36
Conservative	12	12	16

It appears that criticism of the media is based more on sophistication than on ideology, and it applies to a wide range of media standards and practices, not just bias. That is not good news for the press: As people become more knowledgeable and sophisticated about journalism, their outlook becomes more critical, not less. In the past, press criticism tended to come from people who understood very little about journalism. In the future, it is likely to come increasingly from people who understand too much.

Nevertheless, even among the well educated, only a small number express negative sentiments. Public opinion in all groups is still heavily tilted in the positive direction. As table 6 reveals, the news media get a strong vote of public confidence when stacked up against the institutions they typically cover—business, government, and labor. Although people feel the media are the most liberal institution, they give the media the highest marks for impartiality and integrity. The news media even best the government as the institution that has done the most to promote the public good. And while many people criticize the media for abusing its power, the data show much more support for cutting back the power of government, business, and labor.

The public seems to understand and appreciate the adversarial role of the press. It is an establishment institution that keeps an eye on other establishment institutions. The press is subject to the same criticisms as other powerful institutions, especially when it gets "too big for its britches." But the press is generally ahead of the others in public trust.

The professional standards of journalism dictate that no one gets a break. Ask George McGovern, Edward M. Kennedy, or Geraldine Ferraro whether liberals are treated with special solicitude by the press. That helps explain the kind of people who are attracted to journalism—people with a critical, even adversarial, outlook on society. They want to find out what's really going on, the underlying story, and they are professionally suspicious of all institutions and leaders.

As it happens, people with that kind of outlook are more likely to be liberals than conservatives. There seems to be no overriding reason why the press should mirror public sentiment, especially if it is to maintain its watchdog function. Nevertheless, even though these studies do not indicate any bias in newspaper coverage, it may be unhealthy for a society to have a one-sided journalistic elite. While the professional standards of journalism appear to be strong, the extent of liberal conformity in the press is cause for concern. ◆

Taylor

(Continued from page 20)

patients no longer respect their doctors—was clearly disproved. Most patients gave their doctors high marks on the whole range of criteria affecting the relationship. But that's not the complete picture.

Not long ago, patients treated their doctors almost like priests whose mysteries were beyond the comprehension of the layman, and whose judgments were not to be questioned. Not any more.

Many doctors are aware of this changing mood among their patients and are adapting to it. But they still lag some distance behind. Actually, to many patients it seems that their doctors do not review their treatment options, but just make preemptory decisions.

Table 4

EUTHANASIA

Question: Do you think the patient who is terminally ill, with no cure in sight, ought to have the right to tell his doctor to put him out of his misery, or do you think this is wrong?

	Ought to be allowed	Think it is wrong
1973	37%	53%
1977	49	38
1981	56	41
1985	61	36

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, latest that of March 4, 1985.

Table 5

CIGARETTE SMOKING

	1975	1978	1983	1984
Percent of adults smoking cigarettes	43%	37%	30%	28%
Percent of men smoking cigarettes	49	43	33	27
Percent of women smoking cigarettes	37	32	28	30

Source: Surveys by Louis Harris and Associates for *Prevention* magazine, latest that of November 1984.

Table 6

ATTITUDES ABOUT PREVENTION

Question: Here are two approaches to health and sickness: one approach—treatment—which seeks to cure sickness, and another approach—prevention—which seeks to prevent sickness. At the moment, do you think the health care services in your area have got the right balance between *treatment* and *prevention*, or should we be giving more emphasis to treatment, or more emphasis to prevention?

Health care services balance:	
Got the right balance	23%
Should give more emphasis to treatment	10
Should give more emphasis to prevention	52
More emphasis to both (vol.)	3

Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates for *Prevention* magazine, November 1984.

When it comes to making decisions about a prescription drug, less than half of all adults (42 percent) thought that the doctor alone should choose; a majority thought that the doctor and patient should make the decision jointly, after discussing the alternatives. When we looked at three other types of medical decisions—surgery, diet, and exercise programs—much larger majorities thought mutual agreement was appropriate and not the physician's decision alone.

While death is a certainty, we are learning how to postpone it and live longer, healthier lives. Almost all the increases in life expectancy that have occurred in recent years result not from improvements in health care services, but from changes in our lifestyles. The percentage of people who smoke is falling by between 1-2 percent every year, and smoking is an increasingly unfashionable and unpopular habit. In the most recent survey, only 28 percent of adults smoke, down from 43 percent ten years ago (see table 5). And the better educated and more affluent people are, the less likely they are to smoke. Interestingly, the smoking rate of women has now reached the smoking rate of men—a dubious kind of sexual equality. While in the last five years the rates for both sexes have been inching downward, the rates for men have been falling much faster, so that the two have converged. And young women are now more likely to smoke than young men. The number of people wearing seatbelts is rising sharply, even though the great majority of people still do not use them. Alcohol consumption is dropping rapidly as sales of bottled water soar. More people are trying to improve their diets; trying (with only mixed success) to limit their consumption of fat, sodium, sugar, and cholesterol; and trying to eat enough fresh fruit and vegetables, minerals, vitamins, and fiber. The number of people exercising regularly rose sharply over the last decade (but there are some signs that it may no longer be rising). More people than ever before have smoke alarms and fire extinguishers. And more people have regular physical checkups.

These improvements in lifestyles seem to reflect not only advances in knowledge and improved education, but also changes in values and even fashions. Questions of self-esteem and peer pressure are critical. Indeed, peer pressure seems to be the most powerful factor affecting both young people who start to smoke and many smokers who succeed in kicking the habit. There is now majority support for giving more emphasis to the prevention of disease even if this means giving less treatment to the sick (see table 6).

These are just some of the changes through which we are living. There is no sign that the rate of change is slowing; if anything, it is getting faster. The health care system will soon be profoundly different from the one we have today. If we are careful, resourceful, and lucky, by the end of the century we may even be able to satisfy the public's desire for a system that provides affordable quality care accessible to almost everyone. ☑

THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH, established in 1943, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, research and educational organization supported by foundations, corporations, and the public at large. Its purpose is to assist policy makers, scholars, business men and women, the press, and the public by providing objective analysis of national and international issues. Views expressed in the institute's publications are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff, advisory panels, officers, or trustees of AEI.

COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC ADVISERS

Paul W. McCracken, *Chairman, Edmund Ezra Day University Professor of Business Administration, University of Michigan*

Donald C. Hellmann, *Professor of Political Science and International Studies, University of Washington*

D. Gale Johnson, *Eliakim Hastings Moore Distinguished Service Professor of Economics and Chairman, Department of Economics, University of Chicago*

Robert A. Nisbet, *Adjunct Scholar, American Enterprise Institute*

Herbert Stein, *A. Willis Robertson Professor of Economics Emeritus, University of Virginia*

Murray L. Weidenbaum, *Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor and Director, Center for the Study of American Business, Washington University*

James Q. Wilson, *Henry Lee Shattuck Professor of Government, Harvard University*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Richard B. Madden, *Chairman of the Board*
William J. Baroody, Jr., *President*
Willard C. Butcher
John J. Creedon
Richard M. Morrow
Paul F. Oreffice
Richard D. Wood

Tait Trussell,
Vice President, Administration
Joseph J. Brady,
Vice President, Development
Edward Styles,
Director of Publications

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Russell Chapin, *Legislative Analyses*
Denis P. Doyle, *Education Policy Studies*
Marvin Esch, *Seminars and Programs*
Thomas F. Johnson, *Economic Policy Studies*
Marvin H. Kosters, *Government Regulation Studies*
John H. Makin, *Fiscal Policy Studies*
Jack A. Meyer, *Health Policy Studies*
Michael Novak, *Religion, Philosophy and Public Policy*
Howard R. Penniman/Austin Ranney, *Political and Social Processes*
Robert J. Pranger, *International Programs*

PERIODICALS

AEI ECONOMIST, Herbert Stein, *Editor*
AEI FOREIGN POLICY AND DEFENSE REVIEW, Evron M. Kirkpatrick, Robert J. Pranger, and Harold H. Saunders, *Editors*
PUBLIC OPINION, Seymour Martin Lipset and Ben J. Wattenberg, *Co-Editors;* Everett Carll Ladd, *Senior Editor;* Karlyn H. Keene, *Managing Editor*
REGULATION, Anne Brunsdale, *Managing Editor*

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research
1150 Seventeenth Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20036 • 202/862-5800

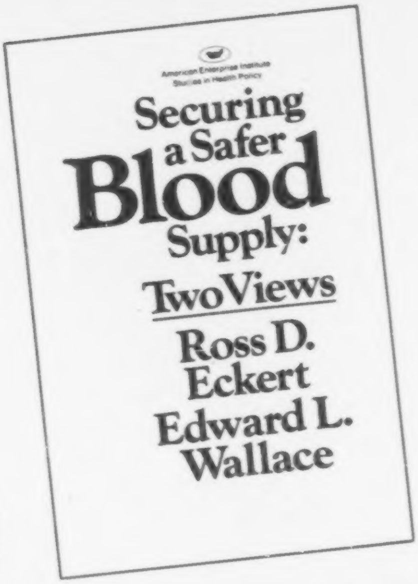
Regulation

Where would you be without Regulation?

Become a Regulation reader—subscribe now ($24.00 for one year, $44.00 for two).
Available from:
American Enterprise Institute
1150 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
Or you may call:
800 424-2873.

What people are talking about—

AIDS!



American Enterprise Institute
Studies in Health Policy
Securing a Safer Blood Supply:
Two Views
Ross D. Eckert
Edward L. Wallace

Concern over AIDS and other illnesses related to blood transfusions has renewed interest in the debate over how a high-quality blood supply can best be achieved and maintained. This volume provides two diverging points of view.

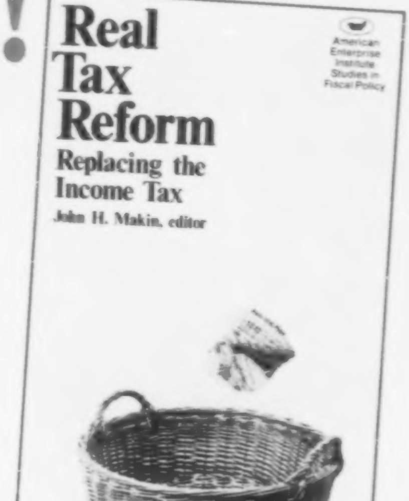
Ross D. Eckert, of Claremont McKenna College and Claremont Graduate School, argues that blood quality is diminished by an unnecessarily large volunteer donor pool. As a result, risk factors associated with AIDS, hepatitis, and other transfusion-related diseases are inadequately screened. He advocates a more tightly screened pool of donors, cash payments to encourage donation, and competition in the market for blood services.

Edward L. Wallace, of the State University of New York at Buffalo and the Center for Management Systems, defends the current volunteer donor system. He argues that the system has brought about a decline in transfusion-related disease and that a well-coordinated national blood services system is optimal. He opposes commercial services and paid donors and praises the American Red Cross for helping to maintain a supply of high-quality blood.

153 pp. / 1985 / paper $8.95 / cloth $16.95

What people will be talking about—

REPLACING THE INCOME TAX!



Real Tax Reform
Replacing the Income Tax
John H. Makin, editor
American Enterprise Institute
Studies in Fiscal Policy

Is a consumption tax the key to fostering economic growth and labor productivity? Some economists and lawmakers say it is, but others call it grossly unfair because it saddles those least able to pay with a disproportionate tax burden. This question is explored in this volume by academics and lawmakers, including David Bradford, Michael Boskin, Don Fullerton, Richard Goode, Charles Hulten, Joseph Pechman, and Senator William Roth. The editor, John H. Makin, is director of Fiscal Policy Studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

"Even those who most passionately oppose enactment of a consumption tax to supplant or supplement our current income tax system acknowledge its inevitability unless popular attitudes toward the income tax change. This is a thoughtful analysis of the pros and cons of such possible dramatic reform. It should be read by every legislator, and by those who vote for legislators."

Barber B. Conable, Jr.
former member of Congress

44 pp. / 1985 / paper $3.95

Mail orders for publications to: American Enterprise Institute, 1150 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 • *For postage and handling, add 10 percent of total; minimum charge $2, maximum $10 (no charge on prepaid orders) • For information on orders, or to expedite service, call toll free* 800-424-2873 *(in Washington, D.C., 202-862-5869) • Prices subject to change without notice • Payable in U.S. currency through U.S. banks only*